JUSTICE

1. Overview

MISSION

Our mission is to serve the residents of the NWT by:

- Working with community members so that communities are safe and secure;
- Ensuring that all residents have access to justice, including legal aid, the courts, alternatives to the courts and other justice-related services;
- Providing legal services to the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and its agencies;
- Protecting the rights and freedoms of individuals and groups; and
- Promoting respect for the law and the Constitution of Canada.

GOALS

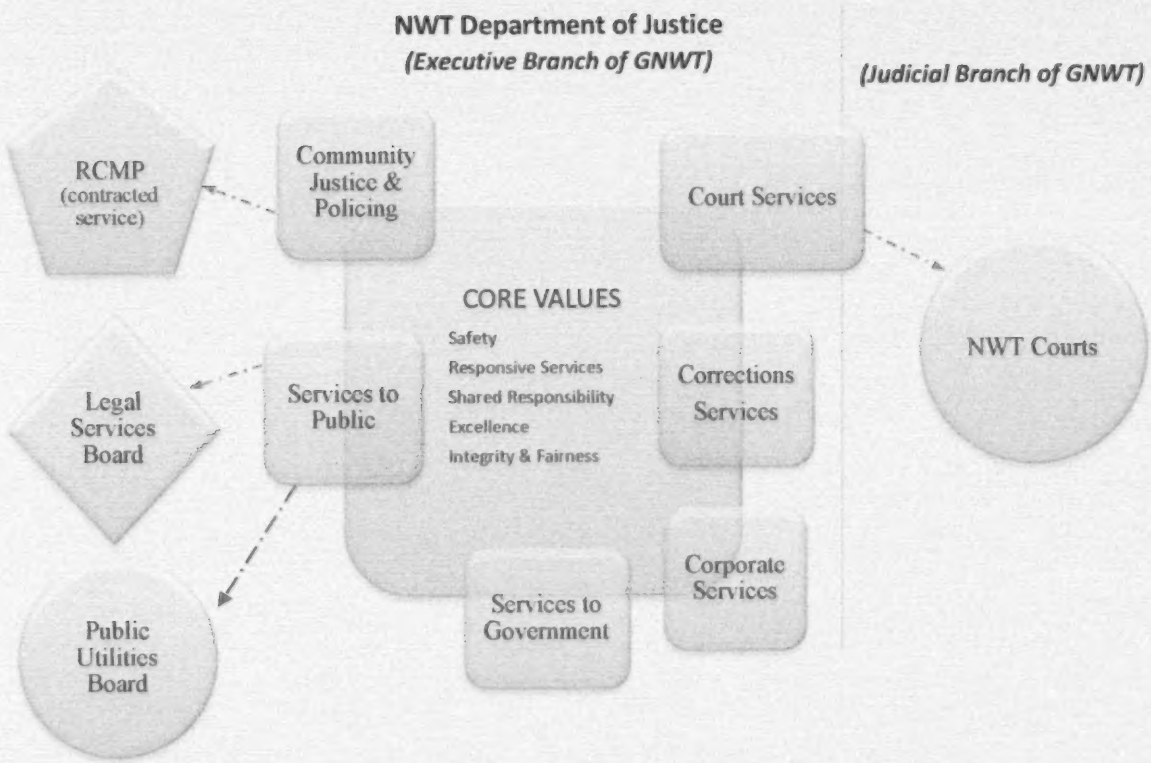
1. Communities have increased capacity and a role in addressing justice issues.
2. Programs, safe and secure custody, and community supervision are in place to support the rehabilitation of offenders.
3. Communities are safer.
4. Victims of crime are supported and have meaningful roles in the justice system.
5. Families in conflict are supported.
6. All residents have access to justice.

KEY ACTIVITIES

- Services to Government
- Law Enforcement
- Legal Aid Services
- Court Services
- Community Justice and Corrections
- Services to the Public

The following diagram presents the Department's key activities and working relationships with other agencies and public bodies as well as the judicial branch of government (courts).

Figure 1


NWT Department of Justice
(Executive Branch of GNWT)
(Judicial Branch of GNWT)
RCMP
(contracted service)
Community Justice & Policing
Court Services
NWT Courts
CORE VALUES
Safety
Responsive Services
Shared Responsibility
Excellence
Integrity & Fairness
Legal Services Board
Services to Public
Corrections Services
Corporate Services
Services to Government
Public Utilities Board

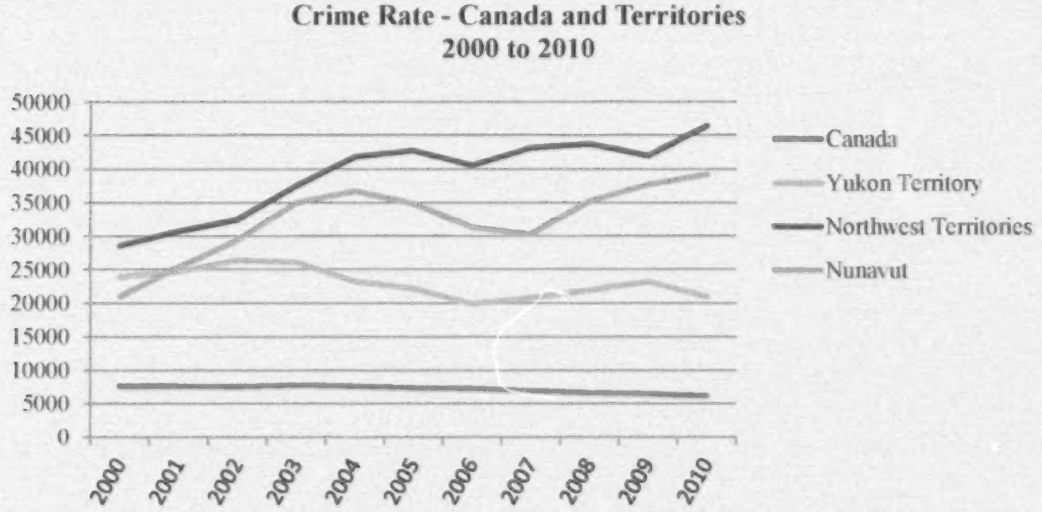
2. Emerging Issues

Improving the Justice System's Approach to Crime

Understanding the NWT's High Crime Rate

The NWT has the highest police-reported crime rate in Canada, and the rate is increasing at a time when crime rates in southern Canada are decreasing. This is influenced, in part, by the high number of police per capita in the NWT (451/100,000-the highest in Canada[1]), which may contribute to a higher level of reporting. Nevertheless, a high rate of crime is also driven by demographic and social factors, such as our relatively young population, low education attainment, and abuse of drugs and alcohol often related to the traumatic impacts of residential schools. In 2010, the Crime Rate, which measures the overall volume of crime in the NWT, went up by 11%.

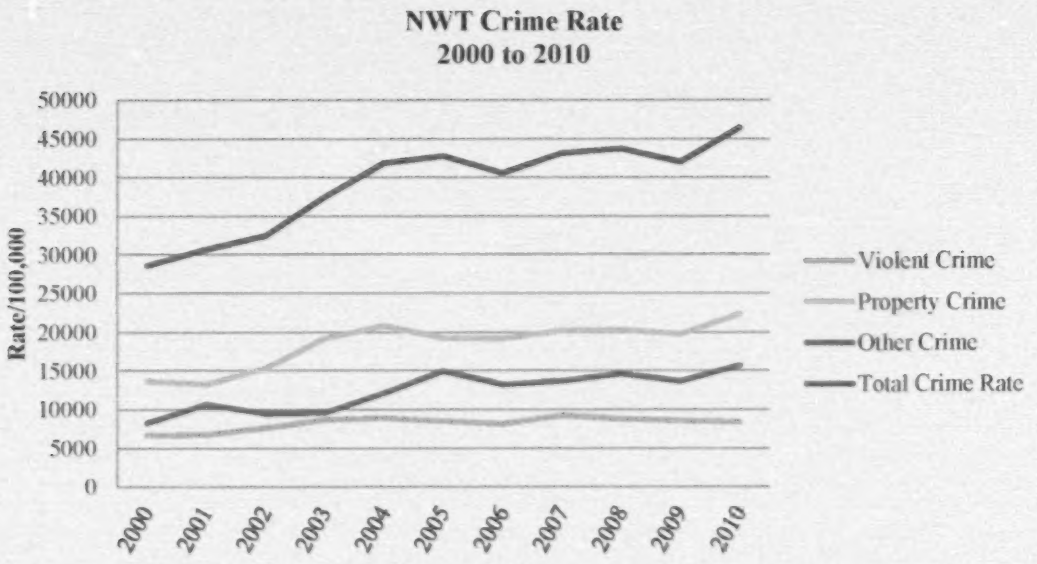
Figure 2



There are three categories of crime included in the Crime Rate: Violent Crime, Property Crime and Other *Criminal Code* Offences. Although Violent Crime decreased by 2% in 2010, Property Crime was up by 13% and Other *Criminal Code* Offences increased by 15%.

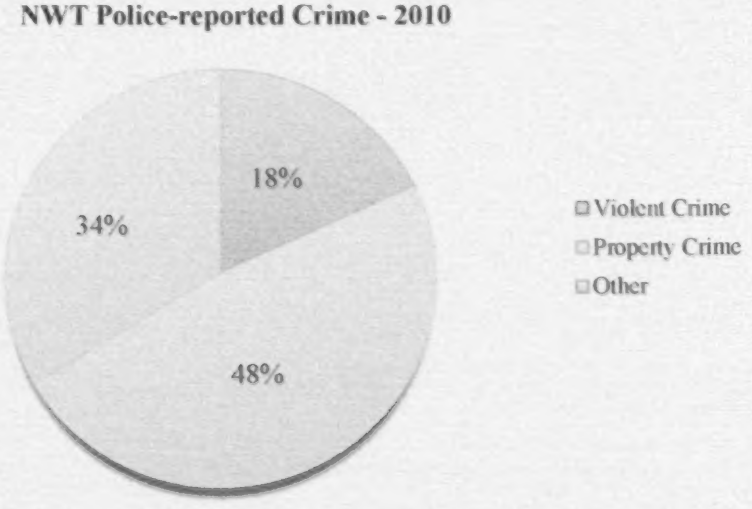
[1] *Police Resources in Canada 2011*, Statistics Canada

Figure 3



Of the non-violent offences reported by police in 2010, 77% of offences classified as "other" were "disturbing the peace" and 78% of offences classified as "property crimes" were "mischief". In 2010, the property and other *Criminal Code* offences made up 82% of the total volume of police-reported crime. Mischief and disturbing the peace are offences that are often related to abuse of alcohol.

Figure 4



Although the NWT violent crime rate decreased in 2010, it is still the second highest in the nation.[2] The high rate of violent crime in the NWT has had – and will continue to have – an impact on police charges, sentenced custody, and the number of accused held in custody awaiting trial or sentencing.

In 2008-09, 88% of adult offenders in custody were male, 88% were Aboriginal, and most were young (median age 29). Many of these offenders share other similarities:

- They probably knew their victim;
- They may have a cognitive disability like FASD or a mental health problem, and/or may be struggling with addictions;
- They most likely plan to return to their home community;
- They may be unemployed;
- This is likely not their first or last crime and their time in custody will be short (median sentence: 122 days).

Rehabilitation of offenders within the corrections system can only be a small part of a longer-term plan to help individuals on their road to recovery and self-sufficiency, and to build healthier, safer communities. Measures to prevent and reduce crime must include initiatives that address social factors, recognize the impact of economic "boom" or "bust" cycles, and mitigate the impact of legislative changes. The justice system cannot address crime alone; social agencies and departments at the territorial and federal levels must work in partnership with communities to deal with the factors that lead to crime.

Factors outside the Department's Control are Driving Demand

The Department will continue to experience a significant increase in demand for services, based largely on factors outside its control. For example, the costs and workload associated with trials, court sittings and court travel are largely controlled by the NWT Courts, and will continue to be highly unpredictable. As well, changes in federal legislation will, in conjunction with cutbacks in federal and territorial programs, have residual and cumulative effects on the courts, corrections services, policing, victim services and legal aid.

One example of federal legislation that is expected to have an impact on the NWT is Bill C-10, *Safe Streets and Communities Act*, which received Royal Assent on March 13, 2012. Bill C-10 includes new offences, mandatory minimum sentences, and higher penalties for some offences, and provides for a tougher approach to youth crime. It is anticipated that the changes proposed in Bill C-10 and other federal criminal law initiatives will, when in force, require that more of the Department's already stretched resources are spent on correctional facilities (either building or renovating), more court sittings and travel, and more legal aid lawyers. As a result, fewer resources will be available for what could be considered more effective approaches such as rehabilitation, crime reduction and prevention initiatives.

In addition to legislation, large-scale economic development projects like the proposed Mackenzie Valley Pipeline are also expected to create pressures on the justice system, as will changes in demographics. Measures to better forecast and address changes in demand are required.

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[2] *Police-reported Crime Statistics in Canada, 2010*, Statistics Canada

Improving Access to Justice

The Needs in NWT Communities Vary Widely

It is not feasible or financially possible to provide justice services exactly the same way in each community. Some services will continue to be so specialized that they are only offered in one location. Likewise, the types of services required for communities like Yellowknife, Hay River, Fort Smith and Inuvik will vary significantly from the types of services that are required in other communities. The challenge for the Department will be to continue to explore how each NWT community can have access to justice services in a way that is both sustainable over time and appropriate for that community's needs.

The Civil/Family Law System is not Fully Responding to Families

The civil/family law system is expensive and time consuming, and does not always provide an effective response to the needs of families in crisis or in transition. The formal legal system can be ill-equipped to resolve family issues that are complicated and emotionally charged. While there are a range of supports for families already in contact with the formal justice system, such as victim services and mediation, the Department's role is limited in how it can assist families before they come into contact with the formal justice system. A new collaborative approach to meeting the needs of families in transition is required.

Building a Strong Foundation

The Department's Financial Capacity is Limited

The Department is not adequately funded to deliver core services and is struggling to sustain its operations. Services required by legislation, and services that are essential to public safety, are critically underfunded. Additionally, over the next 10 years, it is anticipated that the Department's financial capacity will be further weakened by cost drivers outside the Department's influence. As a result, there will be pressure to significantly reduce discretionary programs to offset the overall Departmental deficit. Ironically, it is discretionary programs such as community based initiatives that have the potential to reduce costs in the long term. The Department will need to make difficult financial decisions that are mindful of the effects on partner organizations.

The Department is Not Sufficiently Staffed

The Department is expected to face a shortage of skilled staff throughout the justice system. Recruitment for specialized positions will continue to be difficult, and staff will require ongoing and consistent training to perform their jobs effectively. There are also not enough positions in some territorial functions to create a critical mass for the delivery of legislated justice services. As a thinly staffed organization – particularly for centralized functions that support service delivery and the frontline staff – the Department will continue to be exposed to business continuity issues caused by staff absences and turnover. The Department has many skilled and committed employees but without measures being taken to ensure there are adequate supports for staff and sufficient redundancy in critical areas the Department will see increasing challenges to adequately fulfill its mandate.

Technology is Aging and at Risk of Failure

Justice has a unique set of technological and information needs driven by the legal and practical requirements of our legislated services and core programs. Notably, the Department must provide information technology and systems (IT/IS) infrastructure for the NWT court system in a way that upholds the constitutional principles mandating an independent judiciary. Similar to other GNWT departments, Justice must also have reliable and current IT/IS to support critical operations and delivery of departmental programs.

The Department currently has aging IT/IS infrastructure that is fundamental to supporting core services and programs. Immediate and significant investment is required to replace systems supporting NWT courts, the Correctional Service, Legal Registries and other programs and services. Resources are also required to invest in business continuity measures for ongoing IT/IS needs while also advancing major projects and initiatives.

3. 2012-13 Planning Information

The detailed description of planned activities for the Department includes the following sections:

a) **Fiscal Position and Budget** provides information on the Department's operation expenses and revenues.

b) **Key Activities** describes the Department's major programs and services, including strategic activities, as well as results to date and measures.

c) **Putting Priorities into Action** describes current major activities the Department is leading in supporting the priorities identified by the 17th Assembly.

d) **Infrastructure Investments** gives an overview of the Department's planned infrastructure investments for 2012-13.

e) **Legislative Initiatives** provides a summary of the Department's legislative initiatives during the 17th Legislative Assembly as well as initiatives planned for 2012-13.

f) **Human Resources** includes overall statistics and position reconciliation, information on capacity building activities as well as departmental training and development.

g) **Information Systems and Management** describes Department specific information and management systems as well as major initiatives planned for 2012-13.

a) Fiscal Position and Budget

DEPARTMENTAL SUMMARY

	Proposed Main Estimates 2012-13	Revised Estimates 2011-12	Main Estimates 2011-12	Actuals 2010-11
	($000)	($000)	($000)	($000)
OPERATIONS EXPENSE				
Services to the Government	10,866	10,824	10,394	9,184
Law Enforcement	39,469	35,960	35,120	33,988
Legal Aid Services	5,905	5,912	5,905	5,469
Court Services	11,378	11,293	11,381	11,341
Community Justice and Corrections	40,616	39,326	38,683	39,999
Services to the Public	5,372	5,150	5,161	4,553
TOTAL OPERATIONS EXPENSE	113,606	108,465	106,644	104,534

OPERATION EXPENSE SUMMARY

	Main Estimates 2011-12	Proposed Adjustments: Forced Growth	Proposed Adjustments: Initiatives	Proposed Adjustments: Sunsets and Other Adjustments	Proposed Adjustments: Internal Reallocations	Proposed Budget 2012-13
	($000)	($000)	($000)	($000)	($000)	($000)
Services to Government						
Directorate	1,628	-	-	-	(127)	1,501
Aboriginal Consultation Unit	350	-	50	-	(94)	306
Finance Division	3,103	273	-	-	-	3,376
Legal Division	2,971	539	-	(386)	94	3,218
Legislation Division	1,205	-	-	-	-	1,205
Policy & Planning	1,078	-	18	-	127	1,223
Amortization	59	-	-	(22)	-	37
Total Activity	**10,394**	**812**	**68**	**(408)**	**-**	**10,866**
Law Enforcement						
Territorial Police Services Agreement	34,644	4,102	247	-	-	38,993
First Nations Policing	424	-	-	-	-	424
Biology Casework	52	-	-	-	-	52
Total Activity	**35,120**	**4,102**	**247**	**-**	**-**	**39,469**
Legal Aid Services						
Legal Aid Administration	2,456	-	-	-	-	2,456
Courtworkers	1,120	6	-	-	-	1,126
Legal Aid Staff Lawyers	1,044	1	-	-	-	1,045
Family Law Clinic	409	-	-	-	140	549
Somba K'e Clinic	827	-	-	(7)	(140)	680
Amortization	49	-	-	-	-	49
Total Activity	**5,905**	**7**	**-**	**(7)**	**-**	**5,905**
Court Services						
Courts Administration	565	-	-	-	-	565
Court Library	263	-	-	-	-	263
Court Registries	6,570	37	-	-	-	6,607
Territorial Court	2,471	(7)	-	-	-	2,464
Justice of the Peace	578	-	-	-	-	578
Court Reporters	517	-	-	-	-	517
Amortization	417	-	-	(33)	-	384
Total Activity	**11,381**	**30**	**-**	**(33)**	**-**	**11,378**

OPERATION EXPENSE SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

	Main Estimates 2011-12	Proposed Adjustments: Forced Growth	Initiatives	Sunsets and Other Adjustments	Internal Reallocations	Proposed Budget 2012-13
	($000)	($000)	($000)	($000)	($000)	($000)
Community Justice & Corrections						
Corrections Administartion	1,877	-	-	-	50	1,927
Community Corrections	3,874	936	-	-	(160)	4,650
Adult Facilities	21,802	1,570	-	-	-	23,372
Youth Facilities	5,333	216	-	(670)	110	4,989
Custodial Placement/Community Supervision	787	-	-	-	-	787
Community Justice	3,240	-	148	(316)	-	3,072
Amortization	1,770	-	-	49	-	1,819
Total Activity	**38,683**	**2,722**	**148**	**(937)**	**-**	**40,616**
Services to the Public						
Public Trustee	389	-	-	-	-	389
Coroner's Office	694	-	-	-	-	694
Rental Office	230	-	-	-	-	230
Legal Registries	1,981	41	-	-	-	2,022
Maintenance Enforcement	761	15	-	(7)	-	769
Protection Against Family Violence	424	-	-	-	-	424
Office of the Children's Lawyer	150	-	150	-	-	300
Public Utilities Board	438	-	-	-	-	438
Amortization	94	-	-	12	-	106
Total Activity	**5,161**	**56**	**150**	**5**	**-**	**5,372**
TOTAL DEPARTMENT	**106,644**	**7,729**	**613**	**(1,380)**	**-**	**113,606**

REVENUE SUMMARY

	Proposed Main Estimates 2012-13	Revised Estimates 2011-12	Main Estimates 2011-12	Actuals 2010-11
	(000)	(000)	(000)	(000)
TRANSFER PAYMENTS				
Federal Cost Shared				
Access to Justice	1,972	1,972	1,972	2,069
Youth Justice Services	3,059	3,059	3,059	3,058
Intensive Rehabilitative Custody and Supervision	200	300	200	361
Aboriginal Justice Strategy	-	316	316	315
	5,231	5,647	5,547	5,803
GENERAL REVENUES				
Federal Exchange of Services	755	820	1,445	1,490
Nunavut Exchange of Services	3,353	3,298	3,298	2,765
Community Parole	25	25	25	15
Young Offenders Allowances	25	25	25	35
Public Trustee Fees	101	101	101	135
Court Fees	168	168	168	152
Land Titles and Legal Registries	4,310	4,237	4,237	4,274
Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Fees	4	3	3	5
Court Fines	372	372	372	345
Maintenance Enforcement Program Attachment Costs	24	22	10	32
Interest	3	4	4	-
	9,140	9,075	9,688	9,248
RECOVERIES				
Amortization of Capital Contributions	10	10	-	10
Legal Aid Repayments	60	60	60	83
Air Charter Recoveries	92	103	88	114
Sale of Publications	17	18	18	13
Inmate Recoveries	7	7	7	8
	186	198	173	228
REVENUES	**14,557**	**14,920**	**15,408**	**15,279**

b) Key Activities

KEY ACTIVITY 1: SERVICES TO GOVERNMENT

Description

"Services to Government" includes the corporate management activities of the **Directorate, Policy and Planning Division, Finance Division, Informatics** and the **Aboriginal Consultation Unit**. It also includes services provided to other GNWT departments, boards and agencies. **Legal Division** provides advice and representation to all GNWT departments and specified public agencies. Lawyers conduct litigation, provide legal opinions, and advise on a wide range of matters, and one position is dedicated to the prosecution of territorial offences. GNWT bills and regulations are prepared by or under the direction of legislative drafters in **Legislation Division**, and legal translators prepare French versions of these documents.

The **GNWT Access and Privacy Office** (within the Policy and Planning Division) is responsible for providing advice and information to GNWT public bodies on the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy* (ATIPP) *Act*. Through this Office, the Department provides all GNWT public bodies with oversight and expertise on access and privacy matters relating to ATIPP while also continuing to respond to the increasing number of access-to-information requests directed to the Department. The Office also provides interagency and peer-to-peer communications and support, resources and training, as well as advice and support to GNWT public bodies.

In 2011-12, the Department established a **GNWT Aboriginal Consultation Unit** to provide advice and legal support to GNWT departments engaged in consultation activities. This includes facilitating training and ongoing education for GNWT staff, ensuring that the GNWT's Consultation Framework remains current as the law evolves, and monitoring consultation initiatives to ensure a consistent and legally sound standard is applied across the GNWT.

Major Program and Service Initiatives 2012-13

Justice 10-Year Strategic Plan

Early in 2012-13, the Department will finalize a strategic plan to set overall direction and establish priorities for the NWT justice system over the next 10 years. A five-year implementation plan and performance measures framework will be included as companion documents to the strategic plan. This plan was informed by strategic initiatives already underway, outcomes of past and current evaluations, and ongoing work with key partners such as social program departments, the RCMP, community leadership and frontline service providers. Complementary to this strategic planning exercise, the Department is currently undertaking a risk assessment with the Audit Bureau to identify business continuity risks relating to the delivery of core programs and services. This work is expected to be completed in the spring of 2012, and will assist with prioritizing actions to support core operations that can be taken with existing staff and resources in the short-term as the Department identifies areas requiring a longer-term approach.

GNWT Aboriginal Consultation Unit

The need for the GNWT to engage in meaningful consultation with Aboriginal governments continues to expand as economic and resource development continues in the NWT, as conservation and environmental issues arise, and as land claim and self-government processes advance. The

GNWT needs to employ best practices in discharging its legal obligations to consult, and to ensure that those who carry out consultation activities have the necessary training and tools they require. In 2012-13, training materials will be updated to incorporate changes in the law. The Aboriginal Consultation Unit will also initiate discussions with the Federal Government to advocate that consultation efforts by both the territorial and federal governments are coordinated.

GNWT Access and Privacy Office

In early 2011, the 16th Legislative Assembly allocated additional resources for the GNWT Access and Privacy Office. These increased resources funded a second position in the Office to allow it to move forward on a wide range of access and privacy initiatives, including those recommended by the Legislative Assembly through the review of the Information and Privacy Commissioner's annual reports. Progress on initiatives has regularly been reported in past GNWT responses to Standing Committee reports, and has included the following:

- Development and revision of guidelines and policies pertaining to electronic records, emails and mobile devices;
- Development of privacy assessment tools and privacy breach protocols;
- Development and implementation of new access and privacy training for employees and GNWT boards; and
- Development of guidelines for the application of specific ATIPP exceptions and guidelines for proactive routine disclosure.

The Department will continue this work during 2012-13. Additionally, the Department will conduct a comprehensive review of all past recommendations put forward by Standing Committees and report on this review to the 17th Assembly. Legislative amendments to the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* would be determined pending outcomes of the review of past recommendations and additional analysis of the legislation, policies and practices. The decision to undertake a more in-depth examination of the *Act*, including a review of access to information and privacy legislation in other Canadian jurisdictions, will be dependent on progress on these priority activities and availability of resources.

Legal and Legislative Support

In 2012-13, the Department will continue to provide legal support to the Department of Executive to assist in devolution and resource revenue sharing negotiations with Canada. When instructed, Legislation Division will provide support by drafting new and amending legislation as required for devolution implementation. Justice will also continue to provide legal support to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations (specifically the land claim and self-government negotiation teams). Legal counsel will attend negotiation sessions, advise on and draft various agreements, and provide oral and written legal advice to the negotiating teams as required.

Mitigating Impacts of Large-Scale Resource Development

The Department will continue to participate in GNWT activities to identify, monitor and report on the impacts of large-scale resource development on the NWT justice system. Activities include providing legal advice, identifying service requirements and associated resource needs, and fulfilling commitments made during environmental regulatory processes. A significant aspect of planning work will be carried out in partnership with the RCMP "G" Division to ensure there are adequate policing resources in place when large-scale construction or other resource development activities occur.

KEY ACTIVITY 2: LAW ENFORCEMENT

Description

Policing services for NWT communities are provided by the RCMP through an agreement between the GNWT and the Government of Canada. There are also cost-sharing programs with the Government of Canada with respect to First Nations policing to support additional RCMP resources for policing in the north. An agreement is also in place with Public Safety Canada to cost-share DNA testing and analysis.

Major Program and Service Initiatives 2012-13

Overall

The NWT retains the RCMP to provide territorial level policing and pays 70% of contract costs. The remaining 30% is provided by Canada. The federal government, through the RCMP, is responsible for the enforcement of federal statutes, and for providing services such as forensic laboratories, identification services, the Canadian Police Information Centre, and the Canadian Police College.

20-Year Territorial Policing Agreement (2012-2032)

A new 20-year agreement for RCMP services in the NWT was signed in March of 2012. The new contract gives the NWT more influence over key areas such as cost containment, governance and operational and financial accountability. The contract also provides mechanisms to support appropriate oversight of operational and financial effectiveness. Under this new contract, the NWT will see greater accountability from the RCMP for police services.

In 2012-13, the Department will work with RCMP "G Division" to implement the contract. Justice will also work with federal/provincial/territorial contracting jurisdictions (through a Contract Management Committee) to develop a joint work plan in support of the increased accountability measures outlined in the contract. The Department has added two new dedicated positions to allow it to manage a contract of this size and to adequately participate in the development and ongoing implementation of the accountability framework.

NWT Policing Priorities

Under the Territorial Police Services Agreement, annual policing priorities are established by the Minister of Justice and provided to RCMP "G" Division. In 2012-13, the Department will continue to work with communities and the RCMP to advance the following priorities:

1. Promote public trust and confidence in policing services;
2. Identify policing priorities with every community;
3. Develop policing plans based on community priorities;
4. Target resources to plans; and
5. Ensure ongoing and consistent reporting.

Justice will work with the RCMP to advance these policing priorities by enhancing accountability through better communications, reporting and meaningful community-based planning for policing services. For example, the RCMP will continue to work with communities to develop community policing plans that are responsive to local needs and issues. In 2011-12, policing plans were established for all NWT communities. It is anticipated that this process will be continued in 2012-13

through discussions between local detachments and community leadership with regular reporting to communities on progress in relation to the priorities. In addition to this work, an overarching document will be developed that will highlight and report on progress territory wide.

Aboriginal Policing Programs
In 2012-13, the Department will continue to work in partnership with RCMP "G" Division to advance Aboriginal policing initiatives in the NWT. A primary means to encourage Aboriginal residents to pursue a policing career is found in the RCMP's Community Constable Initiative. Justice will also continue to lobby the federal government to expand and adequately fund the First Nations Policing Program in the NWT.

RCMP Response to Family Violence
The creation of a dedicated position at "G" Division in 2012-13 will assist the RCMP to advance actions to respond to family violence over the longer term, while ensuring that rigorous investigation standards for family violence cases are consistently met. See additional family violence information and activities under Key Activity 5 (Community Justice and Corrections).

Mitigating Impacts of Large-Scale Resource Development
As stated in Key Activity 1 (Services to Government), the RCMP "G" Division will continue to work with Justice and other agencies to ensure there are adequate policing resources in place when large-scale construction or other resource development activities occur.

Measures Reporting

In 2012-13, the Department will work with the RCMP to develop measures that support the NWT policing priorities and reflect the accountability framework established in the new 20-year policing agreement.

KEY ACTIVITY 3: LEGAL AID SERVICES

Description

The **Legal Services Board** (the Board) is established under the *Legal Services Act*, and is responsible for ensuring that all eligible persons in the NWT receive legal aid. The Board provides legal services for most criminal and family law matters, and some civil cases. It determines eligibility for legal aid in accordance with the parameters established by the *Legal Services Act* and Regulations. The Board is also responsible for the court worker program and public legal education.

Major Program and Service Initiatives 2012-13

Overall

The Department and the Legal Services Board are working to maximize the quality of legal services provided to NWT residents and to ensure minimum waiting times for those services. In 2012-13, Justice plans to introduce a new *Legal Aid Act* to modernize and improve the cost-effectiveness of the legal aid program. The Department will work with the Board to implement the new legislation, including new regulations.

The Board is planning to have its full complement of staff lawyer positions filled by the summer of 2012. While on circuit, and in addition to addressing family law matters, legal aid staff will continue to provide assistance on poverty law issues. These services have been very well received in communities across the NWT, particularly with elders seeking assistance with wills.

Piloting a Collaborative Justice Model

In 2011-12, the Department received federal funding to support a design study on the application of an integrated service delivery model for delivery of legal services. In this model, community court workers were proposed as a primary point of contact for people seeking legal services or requiring a greater understanding of the justice system.

In 2012-13, the Department and Board will build on this preliminary research to pilot an integrated/collaborative justice model in three different communities using three different frontline professionals. The court worker in Fort Simpson, the community justice coordinator in Deline and the victim services worker on the Hay River Reserve will play a more prominent role in ensuring that clients have access to justice and other social programs and supports early in the justice system process. The overall goal of this initiative is to help clients access the services that they need in order to deal with underlying issues. The Department will conduct a preliminary evaluation of this pilot to assess whether this community-based approach yields better results for both clients and the justice system.

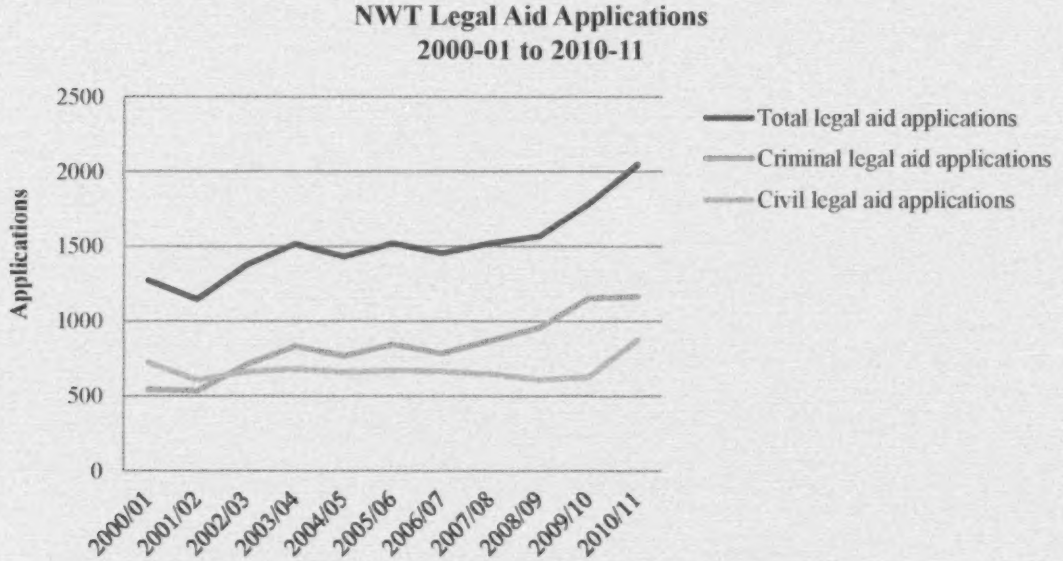
Measures Reporting

The demand on the legal aid program is increasing in both criminal and family/civil law cases. However, the addition of staff lawyer positions to work on family law cases has resulted in a reduction in the backlog of family law services. At the same time, the services provided by the private bar are in decline and there have been increases in costs associated with the program. Further analysis is being done to determine what impact these factors will have on the program and its resource requirements.

Measure 1 – Number of applications for criminal and civil legal aid

Residents of the NWT have access to legal aid for criminal and civil matters. Court workers provide assistance on all applications. In 2010-11, a total of 2,046 applications for legal aid were made: 1,167 for criminal matters and 629 for civil matters.[3] From 2000 to 2011, the total number of legal aid applications increased by over 60%. In the two year period from 2009-10 to 2010-11, applications increased by about approximately 14% overall (Figure 5).

Figure 5



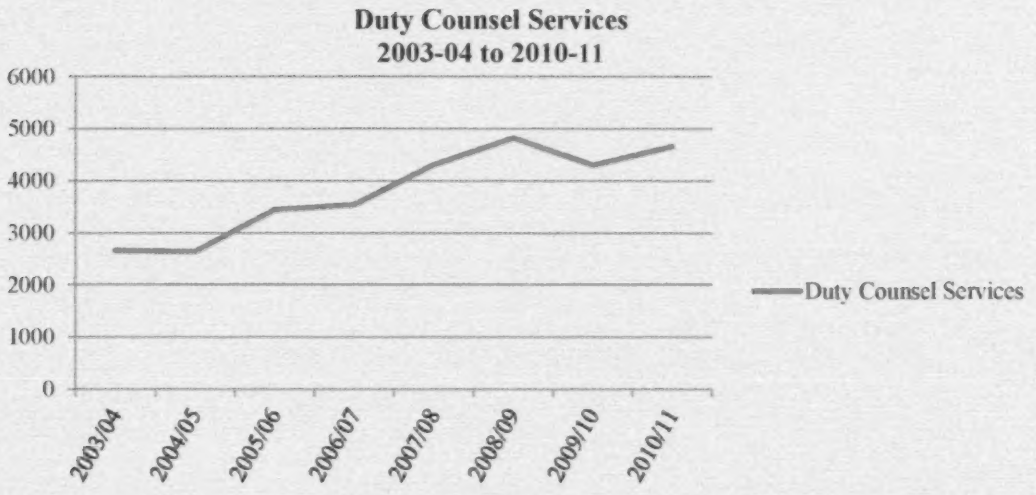
The statistics in Figure 4 do not include criminal matters where an application for legal aid is not required. Under the "presumed eligibility policy", accused persons are provided with certain legal services by duty counsel (including the conduct of a sentencing hearing) without having to make an application for legal aid. Applications for legal aid are made in the criminal context when a matter is proceeding to trial or there is some other complexity associated with the matter.

In 2010-11, lawyers provided 4,661 duty counsel services to clients under the presumed eligibility policy. The number of duty counsel services has increased steadily since 2003-04. The decline in 2009-10 was due to missing data in relation to lawyers providing these services – it does not reflect a drop in duty counsel services (Figure 6).[4]

[3] Data for 2010-11 is provided by the Legal Services Board with prior years from *Legal Aid in Canada: Resource and Caseload Statistics – 2007-08*, Statistics Canada

[4] Data for 2010-11 is provided by the Legal Services Board with prior years from *Legal Aid in Canada: Resource and Caseload Statistics – 2007-08*, Statistics Canada

Figure 6



Measure 2 – Backlog of family law legal cases

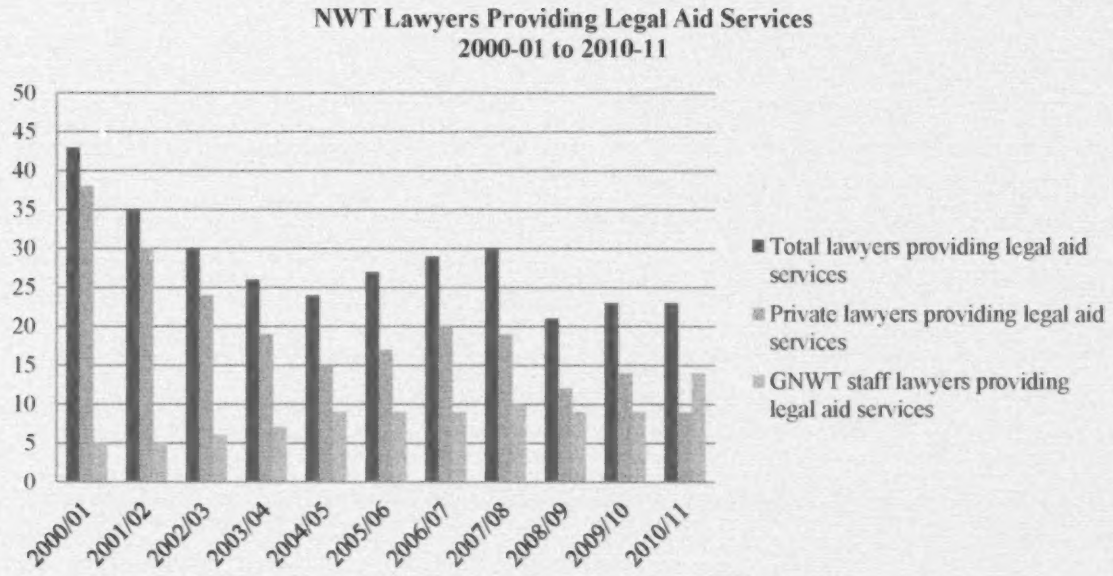
Clients are assigned legal aid lawyers on a priority basis. Over the last 10 years, the backlog has ranged from 28 to 134 clients waiting to be assigned lawyers. The number of staff lawyers employed by the Board has been increased in an effort to address the backlog and deal with the shortage of private lawyers (and particularly family law lawyers) willing to take on legal aid cases. As a result of the increase in staff lawyers, the time clients wait for an assignment of counsel has improved and now stands at approximately two months. It is important to note that each case is assessed to determine if time-sensitive considerations need to be factored in. For example, matters involving child protection or matters with pending court dates are not subject to the waiting period.[5]

As a result of the decline in the private bar, the total number of lawyers providing legal aid services in the NWT in 2009-10 was significantly less than the number providing legal aid services in 2000-01 (Figure 7).[6] However, in more recent years (2009-10 and 2010-11), the number of combined private and staff lawyers providing legal aid services remained the same at 23.

[5]Data for 2010-11 is provided by the Legal Services Board

[6]Data for 2009-10 is provided by the Legal Services Board with prior years from *Legal Aid in Canada: Resource and Caseload Statistics – 2007-08*, Statistics Canada

Figure 7


NWT Lawyers Providing Legal Aid Services
2000-01 to 2010-11
50
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
2000/01
2001/02
2002/03
2003/04
2004/05
2005/06
2006/07
2007/08
2008/09
2009/10
2010/11
Total lawyers providing legal aid services
Private lawyers providing legal aid services
GNWT staff lawyers providing legal aid services

KEY ACTIVITY 4: COURT SERVICES

Description

The NWT has four levels of court which collectively represent the judicial branch of government: Justice of the Peace Court, Territorial Court, Supreme Court and Court of Appeal. The courts are independent of the executive (GNWT departments/boards) and legislative (Legislative Assembly) branches of government. The **Court Services Division** is responsible for providing administrative support to the courts. These support services ensure courts are accessible, impartial and timely. Court Services is also responsible for family law services including mediation and the Parenting After Separation Program.

Major Program and Service Initiatives 2012-13

Overall

The Court Services Division is researching and implementing alternative methods to improve access to services provided to the public, the judiciary and the bar. This includes efforts to improve access to courts through the use of electronic forms, enhancing information on the NWT Courts website and by scanning and providing court files electronically. Depending on the results of a feasibility analysis, court documents, including forms, may eventually be filed electronically.

Specialized Courts

In 2011-12, the Department, in cooperation with the Territorial Court judiciary, established a specialized domestic violence treatment option court for low-risk offenders. The court is supported by an eight-week treatment program offered by Department (Probation) staff. Experience in other jurisdictions indicates that specialized courts can lead to better outcomes for both the perpetrators and the victims of domestic violence. In 2012-13, the Department will monitor the domestic violence treatment options and assess outcomes.

The Department will also work with other social program departments to examine mental health and cognitive disability issues as they present within the justice system. As part of that work, the Department will research the feasibility of a wellness court including the range of health/social program supports that need to be in place for such a court to be established. In conducting this feasibility research, focus will be placed on enhancing existing processes in place such as integrated case management and diversions in order to maximize their use and effectiveness.

Family Law Programs

The Department has been implementing reforms to family law services in an effort to create a more accessible, efficient and responsive system for parents and children. In March 2009, the Department established a roster of family law mediators to provide mediation services to parents involved in legal disputes relating to custody, access and financial support. Family mediation is an interest based process that provides parents with an opportunity to meet with an experienced and neutral mediator. This program continues to be an alternative to court and offers a cooperative approach to solving legal problems. Mediation is confidential and can save time and money.

The Department is continuing to offer a Parenting After Separation Program. The program consists of a one-day workshop to help parents understand the effects of separation and divorce on themselves and their children. It offers suggestions about how to make positive parenting choices while living apart. The goal of the workshop is to help make the transition through separation or divorce easier for

both children and parents. The Supreme Court of the NWT will continue the pilot requiring Yellowknife parents to participate in this program before they can file an application for custody and access.

In 2012-13, the Department will continue to offer mediation and parenting after separation programming. Both programs will be evaluated to identify successes and potential areas for improvement.

Alternative Dispute Resolution Services

Alternative dispute resolution through arbitration and mediation is not as formal and procedurally complex as court, and there is less reliance on lawyers. Justice will continue work to determine the feasibility of offering alternative dispute resolution services for civil matters. The Department currently offers the above-mentioned mediation services for family law matters, and it will continue to explore how this alternative approach could be used to resolve smaller contracts, services or employment matters.

Improve Information and Use of Technology

In 2012-13, the Department will research requirements for the replacement of the court information management system (called FACTS). The Department will also continue work on the document imaging project with all active and new files, and assess the feasibility of video conferencing in various courts for a range of matters. A review of the NWT Courts public website will be conducted in order to identify and implement improvements that would permit greater access to information, including forms for both the public and legal counsel. The Department also plans to work with other departments to develop and implement new methods for the collection of court fines (other than *Motor Vehicle Act* fines), including an online payment system that will allow residents to pay outstanding fines or fees online.

Measures Reporting

Measure 1 – Court processing time

A basic principle of the Canadian criminal justice system is that an accused person has the right to be heard in a timely manner. Preparations for each case start in the court registry with the scheduling of the first court appearance, and involve the continued coordination of judicial resources throughout the criminal court process. There are a variety of factors – many of which are not under the direct control of the courts – which affect both case management and processing time, such as a shortage of lawyers, increases in crime severity, investigative techniques and evidence, and case complexity. Other factors influencing court workloads and processing time can also include recognition by the courts of the impact of mental illness and the need for psychological or psychiatric assessments.

In Canada, the average elapsed time from the first to last court appearance was 224 days in 2009-10. In that year, adult criminal cases in NWT courts were processed in an average of 81days. Although the NWT has one of the shortest processing times in Canada, this is an increase from earlier lows when the average processing time for the NWT was 61 days (Figure 8).[7] Based on information from the NWT courts, the number of matters heard in Territorial Court increased from 8,023 in 2002 to a high of 16,751 in 2009, but has since declined to 14,297 matters (Figure 9).

[7] *Integrated Criminal Court Survey, 2009-10*, Statistics Canada

Figure 8

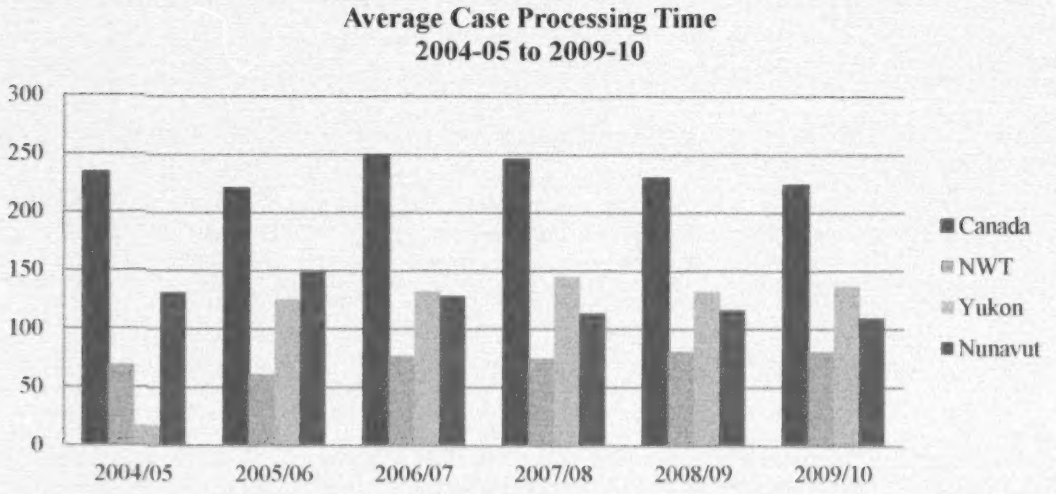
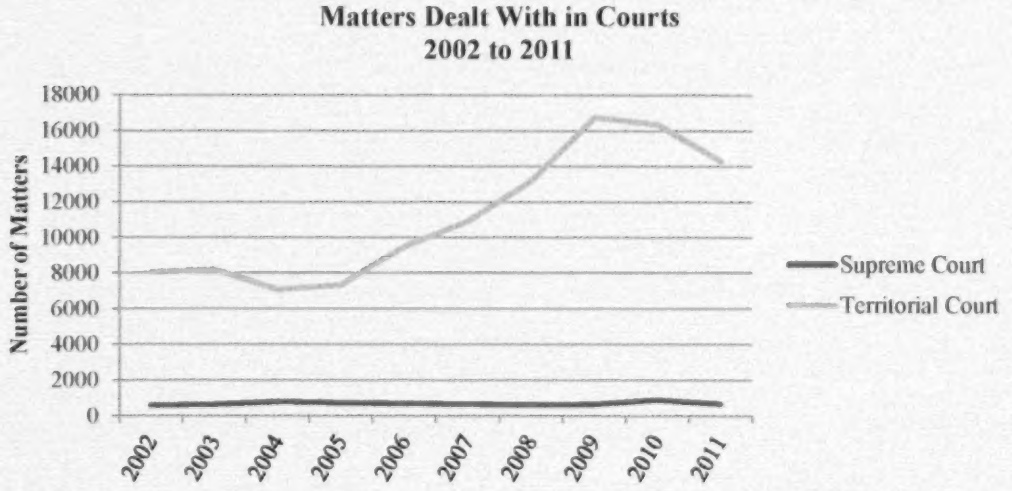


Figure 9



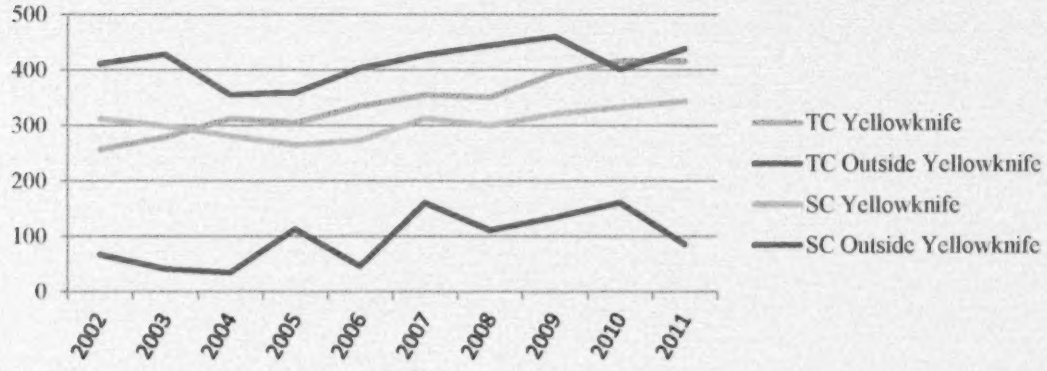
Measure 2 – Number of sitting days by court and community

Increases in the number of matters heard by the courts are also reflected in the number of scheduled sitting days. NWT judges travel to communities to hear a variety of matters. According to court statistics, in 2011 the Territorial Court scheduled 51% of its sitting days in communities outside Yellowknife. Between the years 2002 and 2011, the number of scheduled sitting days in all communities increased by 23% (Figure 10).

The Supreme Court has also seen an increase in sitting days. Between 2002 and 2010, there was an overall increase in scheduled sitting days of approximately 30%. In 2011, sitting days declined from the 2010 high of nearly 500 days to 430 days (Figure 10).[8]

Figure 10

Scheduled Sitting Days - Supreme and Territorial Courts
2002 to 2011



[8] Provided by Court Services, Department of Justice, 2011

KEY ACTIVITY 5: COMMUNITY JUSTICE & CORRECTIONS

Description

The **Community Justice Division** provides support to communities to develop and implement sustainable local justice programming in the areas of restorative justice, victim services, community policing and crime prevention. This includes the diversion program where communities assist youth and adults to deal with matters outside the formal justice system. Support is also provided to communities to enhance crime prevention activity at the local level. The Division also works closely with the RCMP on policing priorities and community safety initiatives.

The **Corrections Division** provides safe custody and supervision of adult and youth offenders. This is achieved through the operation of correctional facilities and the supervision of offenders sentenced to community based orders such as conditional sentences and probation orders. The Division delivers culturally relevant programs to support offender rehabilitation and reintegration, including wilderness camps and elder support.

Major Program and Service Initiatives 2012-13

Community Justice – Overall

In 2012-13, the Department will continue to have program and coordinator funding available to every community in the NWT to address local justice issues and contributing factors such as FASD and alcohol and drug abuse. Justice is also working with Nunavut and Yukon to establish an evaluation framework which can be used to measure the success of local justice programming and help to inform future directions for the north.

As indicated in Key Activity 2 (Law Enforcement), the Department – through this Division and others – will work with the RCMP to implement the new 20-year agreement and to build a police force that is reflective of the people of the NWT, is able to meet their needs, and is founded on the principles of community policing. This includes the continuation of work with communities to develop policing plans.

Community Safety Strategy

The Department will complete a draft Community Safety Strategy early in 2012-13. The Department has conducted research and developed a framework for the strategy. The strategy will identify issues, look at long-term goals, assess capacity to achieve those goals and identify actions to move forward. Some actions may be territory-wide, such as the potential for legislative initiatives.

As part of this initiative, a collaborative approach to supporting community safety will be piloted in three communities. This approach is a model for communities to use to identify what is important to the community, to map out the resources that are available locally, and to identify what can be done to address justice issues. These pilot projects will be facilitated by the Court Worker in Fort Simpson, the Community Justice Coordinator in Deline and the Victim Services worker on the Hay River Reserve (the same community workers and communities identified in the Collaborative Justice Model under Key Activity 3: Legal Aid Services).

Community Justice Committees

In 2012-13, the Department, in partnership with the communities and key stakeholders such as the RCMP, will develop an action plan to support the recommendations from the 2010-11review of the community justice program, as presented in the report, *NWT Community Justice Review: Together We're Better –Looking Ahead.* Review recommendations focus on the areas of capacity building, knowledge dissemination, training, program support and networking. The Department will also develop on-line training materials for each community justice initiative and will work in partnership with community-based agencies to support youth in contact with the justice system as victims or offenders.

Not Us! Anti-Drug Awareness Program

Illicit drug activity continues to grow in the NWT and there have been widespread demands for education and prevention services to address the use and experimentation with "hard" drugs. These drugs include cocaine, crack cocaine, and crystal methamphetamine. Other specific drug activities are less prevalent but are nonetheless of grave concern, including intravenous (IV) drug use, use of ecstasy and heroin, and the prevalence of multi-drug additions.

In 2008-09, the Department developed the *GNWT Crystal Methamphetamine and Associated Drugs Prevention Strategy* with input from Health and Social Services, Municipal and Community Affairs, Education, Culture and Employment, and RCMP "G" Division. This strategy identified, as a first priority, the need for an anti-drug awareness campaign. The *Not Us!* initiative received ongoing funding in the 16th Legislative Assembly, and the territorial campaign was launched in March 2010 as a partnering event with the local efforts of the Hay River Community Action Group.

In 2012-13 and future years, Justice will continue to provide resources through the *Not Us!* initiative to assist communities to develop and sustain local initiatives to combat substance abuse and the illegal use and sale of drugs. The Department will continue to provide information on the campaign to all communities through various means, including community presentations, advertising and the *Not Us!* website and Justice public website. An evaluation framework will be developed to assess the success of the campaign and inform future direction and activities.

Victim Services

With the support of federal funding over a five-year period (2011-12 to 2015-16), the Department will continue to support seven victim services programs in the NWT.[9] In 2012-13, this work will also include two outreach positions, one each in the South Slave and Beaufort Delta regions. Justice will continue to build capacity for victim services by providing training and building public awareness. Victim services materials will be reprinted and distributed. This funding will also support the Victims of Crime Emergency Fund.

The Department will examine ways to improve services and supports for children and youth victims of crime. The work will be informed by recommendations from the *Child Advocacy Centre Feasibility Study* (to be completed in the spring of 2012), and best practice experiences of child advocacy centres with a similar focus across Canada.

The Department will build on the results of consultations with victims workers, and conduct an evaluation of the current community-based victim services delivery model starting in 2012-13. The evaluation will be informed by the results of national work examining RCMP referrals carried out by federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions.

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[9] This federal funding is presented under *Work Performed on Behalf of Others* in the Department's Main Estimates.

Family Violence

Protection Against Family Violence Act – In 2011-12, Justice completed an evaluation of the first five years of the delivery of the *Protection Against Family Violence Act*, as well as an analysis of the transcripts from applications for emergency protection orders. In 2012-13, the Department will continue work to respond to the recommendations, including those which propose amending the legislation. In addition to these recommendations and in response to one documented abuse of the legislation, Justice is reviewing information that is provided to respondents about their rights when they are served with an emergency protection order. The goal of this review is to assist respondents to understand both their rights as well as their responsibilities when served with an order.

Piloting a Program for Men Who Use Violence – In 2012-13, the Department will look at options to pilot the Program for Men Who Use Violence. The main purpose of this pilot is to protect victims while giving violent (high-risk) men opportunities to change their behaviour. As part of the research and development of this pilot, community action research was conducted in 12 communities across the NWT. This research collected strength based experiences of non-violence from of a wide variety of men, and resulted in a DVD documentary entitled: *Non-Violence: A Strength-Based Community Inquiry.*

Specialized Domestic Violence Treatment Options Court for low-risk offenders – In 2011-12, the Department, in cooperation with the judiciary, established a specialized domestic violence treatment option court for low-risk offenders. The court process is supported by an eight-week treatment program offered by Justice Probation staff. In 2012-13, this treatment program and supports for this specialized court will be assessed.

Risk Assessment Tool – The Department, in collaboration with Health and Social Services, the RCMP and Public Prosecution Service of Canada, will monitor the use of the Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment tool that was implemented NWT-wide in 2009-10 for use with domestic violence cases. This initiative will ensure best practices are in use.

RCMP Family Violence Position – The creation of a dedicated position at "G" Division in 2012-13 will assist the RCMP to advance actions to respond to family violence over the longer term, while ensuring that rigorous investigation standards for family violence cases are consistently met. This position will also allow the RCMP to work with the GNWT and the Public Prosecution Service of Canada to improve outcomes in family violence cases. The Department will continue to work with the RCMP and community-based agencies to improve our response to family violence, including shared training on common risk assessment tools.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

The justice system is finding ways to respond to the needs of those who may be affected by FASD and other cognitive disabilities. The Department's FASD consultant provides knowledge, expertise and information on best practices to the Department, other GNWT departments, agencies and community partners. The consultant also helps justice stakeholders understand and better accommodate people with cognitive difficulties including FASD. In 2012-13, the Department's FASD consultant will continue to work with Corrections and other GNWT departments (Health and Social Services, Education, Culture and Employment) to increase awareness of the impact of FASD and identify supports to accommodate offenders and victims/witnesses who may be living with FASD. This will include enhanced community-based diversion programming with a focus on youth who may be living with a cognitive disability like FASD.

Corrections – Overall

The Department continues to focus its efforts on identifying and addressing the criminogenic needs of offenders. Particular focus is being placed on effective case management and the reintegration of offenders into their communities upon release. Central to this work is the recognition of the need for community involvement, local capacity building and culturally relevant corrections programs and facilities. In addition, a preliminary review of the *Corrections Act* will be completed in 2012-13 as a first step to evaluating where changes and improvements should be made to this Act.

Correctional Programs

In 2012-13, the Department will continue implementing programs that are culturally appropriate, based on core correctional practices and suited to our offender population. Justice is also establishing a process for the ongoing evaluation of all programs. This includes developing advisory committees responsible for analyzing the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs. Activities will include:

- Looking at the potential for community programming partnerships (e.g. development of workplace and literacy skills);
- Researching key areas such as alcohol and drug treatment, young offender rehabilitation and programming for female offenders;
- Examining new methods for offender management and staff training;
- Active involvement in Domestic Violence Treatment Court through assessment of offenders and delivery of the PARTNER[10] program;
- Considering approaches to aftercare; and
- Improving approaches to mental health problems and cognitive disabilities like FASD.

Integrated Case Management Approach

In 2012-13, the Department plans to continue activities on an integrated case management approach begun during the 16th Legislative Assembly. This will include the delivery and refinement of training that is currently underway. An interdepartmental working group will be established with Health and Social Services, Education, Culture and Employment, Municipal and Community Affairs and Executive to examine approaches to support integrated case management approaches with a focus on mental health.

Staffing and Facility Use

Corrections facilities and probation services have been challenged to meet service demands given increased case loads and insufficient human resources funding. The Department was successful in obtaining additional resources in these areas starting in 2011-12. Staffing these positions will continue in 2012-13. This investment is helping to eliminate the high reliance on overtime and relief staff in correctional facilities. The resulting savings could be used to cover the cost of other full-time positions within the facilities. As well, new probation officer positions are assisting with the response to increased caseloads in communities, ensuring supervision of offenders, providing appropriate service in court, and ensuring public, staff and offender safety needs are met. Over the next year the focus will be on staffing and reviewing the success of the implementation of the new staffing model.

The Department also intends to develop a plan to support improved human resources activities within the Corrections Service. This plan will focus on meeting its staffing needs now and into the future and

[10] PARTNER – Planning Action Responsibility Toward Non-Violent Empowered Relationships

will address training.

A planning study for a new correctional facility in Fort Smith for women and girls has been completed. Approval for this project is pending, awaiting the identification of capital funding.

Victim Notification Program

The Victim Notification Program provides victims of crime with information about an offender's sentence start and expiry dates, eligibility for temporary absences, escapes and releases from custody, as well as other information on the status of the offender. Victims have to apply for the program. In 2012-13, the Department plans to continue to monitor delivery of the program and make improvements based on the findings. Amendments to the *Corrections Act* are expected to include changes to support the delivery of the program.

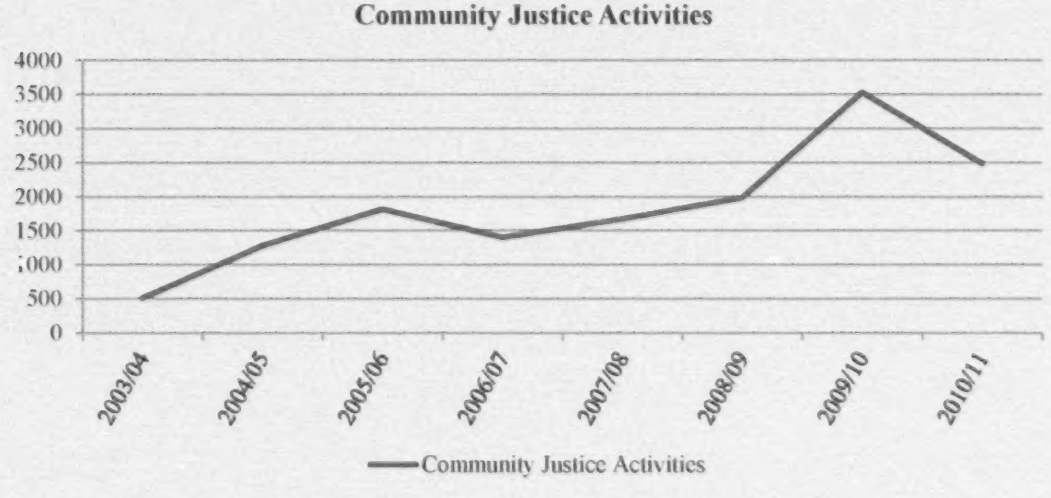
Measures Reporting

Community Justice Measures

Measure 1 – Percentage of communities active in community justice activities

In 2010-11, 28 communities (85%) were involved in 2,481 community justice activities involving 8,801 people.[11] Funding of $20,000 to $30,000 was provided to 24 of these communities to employ a justice coordinator, some on a prorated basis. In addition, each community received additional funds to maintain its community justice program. During that fiscal year, there was a decrease in community justice activities (Figure 11)[12]; however, there remains a high level of interest and commitment to community justice and crime prevention activities in NWT communities. Training is required on an ongoing basis to support the level of programming communities require.

Figure 11



[11] Activities include diversions and non-diversion activities such as on the land programs, community events and workshops addressing local justice issues.

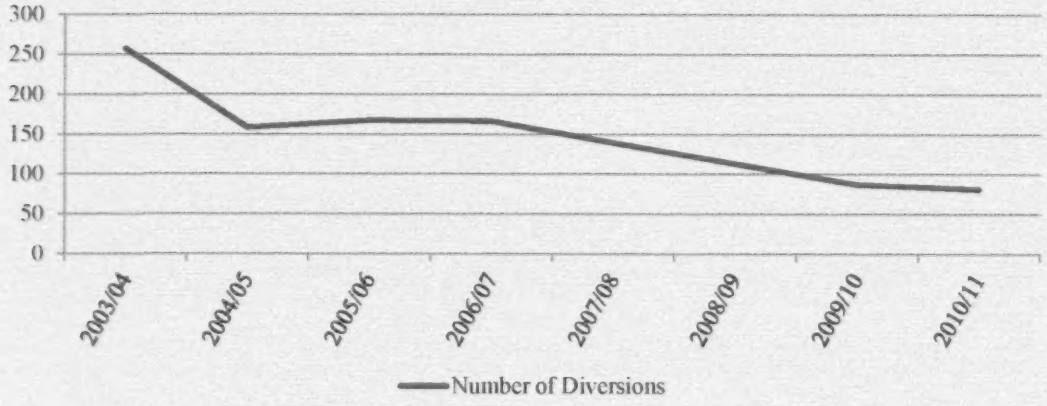
[12] Information provided by the Community Justice Division, Department of Justice, based on community reports.

Measure 2 – Number of diversions

The diversion program continues to be an important program for many community justice committees. In 2010-11, there were 81 diversions. The number of diversions has dropped from a high of about 260 in 2003-04 (Figure 12). Work with the RCMP, additional training in 2011-12, and work with the communities in support of diversions (including changes to the protocol) is expected to increase the number of diversions.

Figure 12

Number of Diversions in the NWT
2003-04 to 2010-11



Measure 3 – Number of victims of crime that access services

Over the past several years, there has been an increase in support for victim services and a corresponding increase in the number of victims of crime served. Currently there are community-based victim services in 11 communities (Inuvik, Aklavik, Paulatuk, Fort Good Hope, Yellowknife, Behchokǫ̀, Gamèti, Whatì, Hay River, Fort Smith, Fort Simpson), with each office providing victims of crime and tragedy with information, assistance, support and referrals. In 2010-11, 1,860 victims received services from victim services workers in these 11 communities. This is a slight decrease from 2009-10, when 1,974 victims received services from victim service workers in the 11 communities.

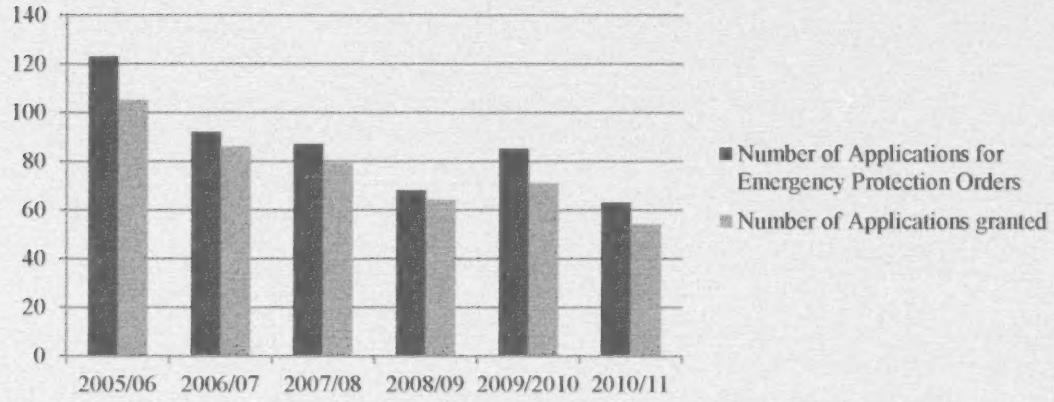
Measure 4 – Number of emergency protection orders applied for and granted

Applications for emergency protection orders under the *Protection against Family Violence Act* declined in 2010-11 (Figure 13). In 2010-11, 63 emergency protection orders were applied for, with 54 granted. This is lower than the previous year but still remains higher than the rate of 50 applications per year anticipated when the legislation was developed.[13]

[13]Information provided by the Community Justice Division, Department of Justice.

Figure 13

Number of Applications for Emergency Protection Orders Made and Granted in the NWT 2005-06 to 2010-11

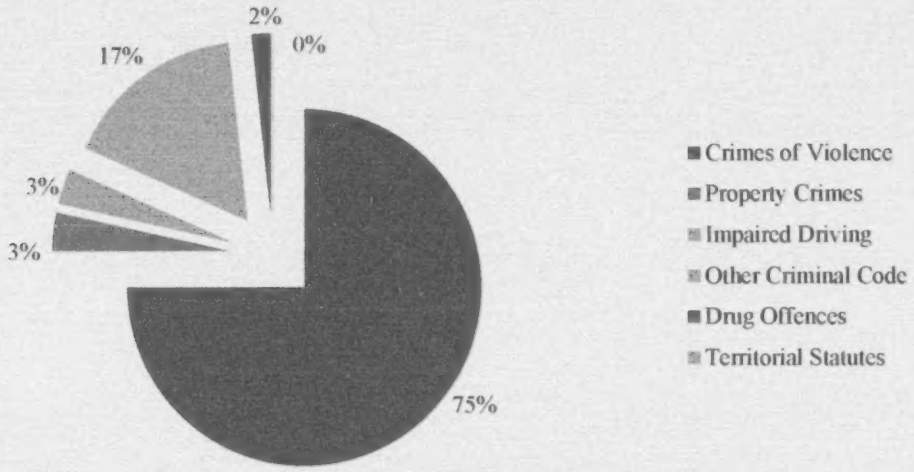


Corrections Measures

In 2010-11, based on the most serious offence, 75% of admissions to custody in the NWT were for crimes of violence (Figure 14).[14]

Figure 14

NWT - Sentenced to Custody by Most Serious Offence 2010-11



Severity of crime and sentence length each have implications for the safe and secure custody of offenders and effective programming. Successful participation by offenders relies on an effective assessment of offender needs, development of evidence based programs to meet those needs, and effective delivery of programs by staff. The following corrections measures provide information on these areas.

Measure 1 – Percentage of offenders with temporary releases revoked

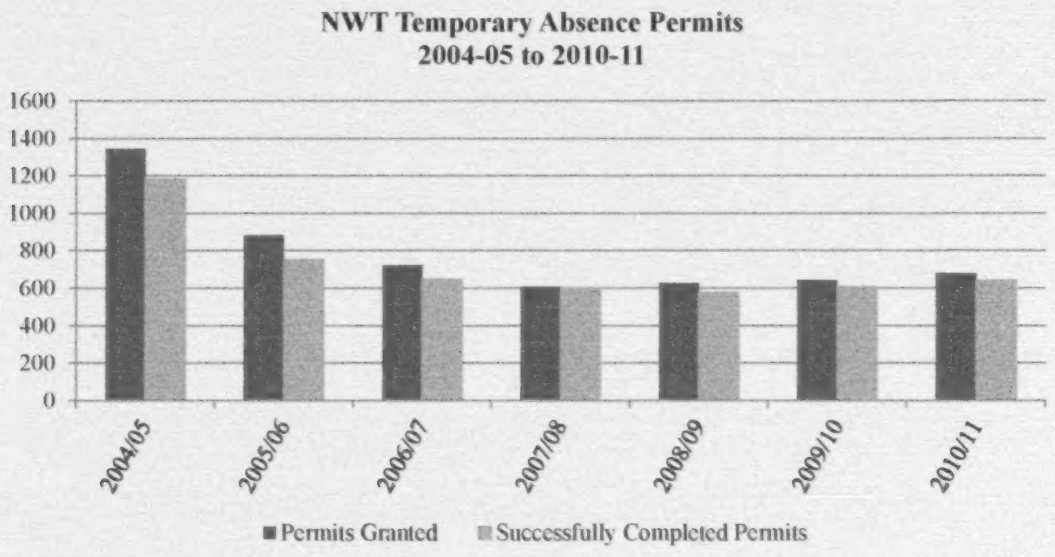
A fundamental principle guiding the Corrections Service is that the management of offenders should be carried out in the least restrictive manner possible, given the risks presented by each offender and the need to protect the public, staff and other offenders. A temporary release is granted to sentenced offenders whose risk is assessed as appropriate to attend programming outside corrections facilities to address their needs. "Needs" in this case is based on behaviours of offenders that have been proven to lead to re-offending (also referred to as "criminogenic needs"). The granting of temporary releases for inmates to attend targeted programming that would assist in changing behaviour or addressing needs is encouraged, as it is preferable to more restrictive incarceration in a correctional facility.

In 2010-11, 678 permits were issued for temporary absences involving 270 inmates, and of these 95% (641) of these temporary absences were successfully completed. Between 2004-05 and 2009-10, there was a 52% decrease in the number of permits issued for temporary release, with a slight

[14] *Adult Correctional Services in Canada, 2008-2009* Reference Tables

increase in 2010-11 (Figure 15). The historic decrease in the number of permits can be attributed to the overall decline in the number of offenders sentenced to custody, combined with the "hardening" of the offender population as fewer offenders are considered appropriate for temporary release. The NWT has also experienced an increase (from 88% to 95%) in the success rate of those offenders on temporary release between 2008-09 and 2010-11.

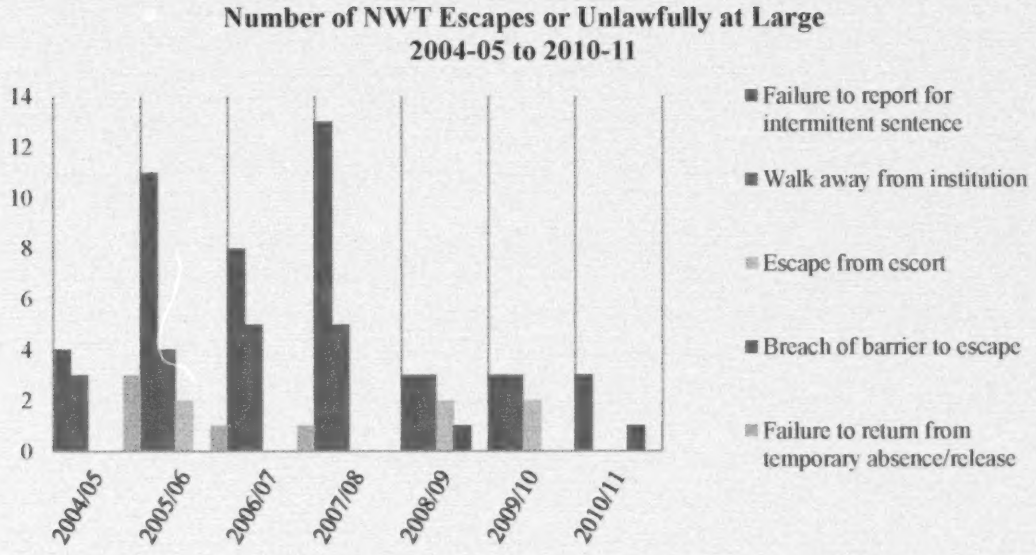
Figure 15



Measure 2 – Number of escapes or offenders unlawfully at large

In 2010-11, four offenders were unlawfully at large: three were serving their sentence intermittently (i.e. weekends) and failed to report on schedule, and one breached a barrier to escape. In the last six years, the number of offenders unlawfully at large has been decreasing with a high of 18 in 2005-06 to a low of four in 2010-11 (Figure 16).

Figure 16


Number of NWT Escapes or Unlawfully at Large
2004-05 to 2010-11
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
2004/05
2005/06
2006/07
2007/08
2008/09
2009/10
2010/11
Failure to report for intermittent sentence
Walk away from institution
Escape from escort
Breach of barrier to escape
Failure to return from temporary absence/release

KEY ACTIVITY 6: SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC

Description

Services to the Public includes a number of programs and services that are accessible to all residents. This includes services available from the following:

- Public Trustee's Office;
- Office of the Children's Lawyer;
- Coroner's Office;
- Rental Office;
- Legal Registries (land titles, corporation and society registration, personal property registration, regulation in securities trading);
- Maintenance Enforcement Office;
- Protection Against Family Violence Program[15]; and
- Public Utilities Board.

Major Program and Service Initiatives 2012-13

Office of the Children's Lawyer

In 2011-12, the Department established the Office of the Children's Lawyer. The program provides children with a voice in child protection and family law disputes. The Children's Lawyer ensures that children are aware of their rights and understand the legal process. It is expected that having a lawyer to represent children will result in more cases settled without going to trial and more decisions made that truly reflect the best interest of children. In 2012-13, information on activities will be collected to assess the costs associated with the program and the effect of this service on outcomes in child custody cases.

Legal Registries

Implementation of the Corporate Registries online search system is expected to be completed within the first six months of 2012-13. The public will have online access to conduct searches from their homes or office, and will be able to pay by credit card. The Department will continue work on an electronic database and online search system to replace the manual title search currently available in Land Titles. The Department will also continue to participate in the development of national rules to harmonize securities regulations. If a decision is made to proceed with a national securities regulatory authority, the NWT will need to participate in the implementation activities. Other initiatives within the Legal Registries Division include program enhancements to the process for appointing commissioners for oaths and notaries public, and developing legislation to replace the current filing requirements in the *Partnership Act* with a more comprehensive registration scheme requiring periodic renewal.

Child Support Recalculation Service

In 2012-13, the Department will conduct a feasibility study on the establishment of a child support recalculation service. In addition to looking at different delivery models, the study will also determine if new resources would be required to implement an NWT program. This service would

[15] Information on family violence initiatives is included in Key Activity 5: Community Justice and Corrections.

allow the Department to recalculate child support payments using parents' updated annual income information, and it could significantly reduce the need for parents to go to court to update the amount of support in order to keep pace with increases in the cost of living or to take into account involuntary reductions in income.

Public Utilities Board

In 2012-13, the Department will assume responsibility for the provision of financial, administrative and operational support to the Public Utilities Board. The Board is an independent regulatory agency responsible for the regulation of energy utilities in the Northwest Territories. The main function of the Board, derived from the *Public Utilities Act*, is to protect the public interest by establishing utility rates that are just and reasonable to the consumer, while at the same time allowing the utilities the opportunity to earn a fair rate of return. The Board's main activity in 2012-13 will be the review of the NWT Power Corporation's general rate application.

Measures Reporting

Measure 1 – Percentage family support collected (total collection rate) through maintenance enforcement

In 2009-10, the Maintenance Enforcement Program collected 85% of the amount due to families. This collection rate is comparable with the five other jurisdictions reporting this information: Yukon (98%), New Brunswick (89%), Nova Scotia (86%), Alberta (80%) and Prince Edward Island (74%).[16]

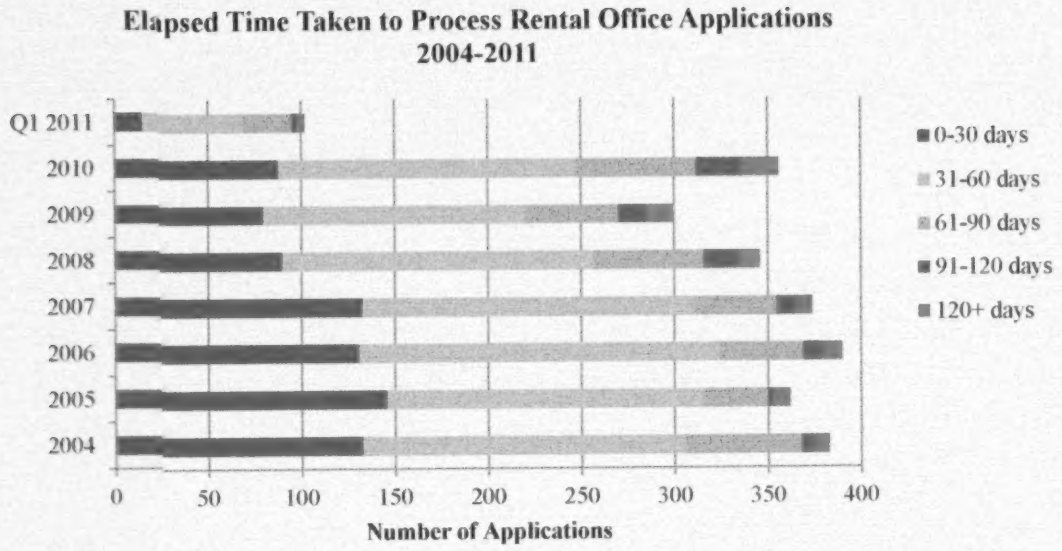
Measure 2 – Rental office application filings and hearings

Between 2006 and 2009, the number of rental office applications decreased from 390 to 299 (Figure 17). In 2010, the applications increased dramatically to 356 due to increased activity by local housing organizations and the added requirement to write eviction orders.[17] In that same year, approximately 70% of the applications were heard within 60 days of filing and 25% were heard within 30 days.

[16] *Child and Spousal Support: Maintenance Enforcement Survey Statistics – 2009-10*, table 12, Statistics Canada. (most recent data available)

[17] Information from Annual Reports of the Rental Officer 2004 to 2009

Figure 17


Elapsed Time Taken to Process Rental Office Applications
2004-2011
Q1 2011
2010
2009
2008
2007
2006
2005
2004
0
50
100
150
200
250
300
350
400
Number of Applications
0-30 days
31-60 days
61-90 days
91-120 days
120+ days

c) Responding to the Priorities of the 17th Legislative Assembly

The Department of Justice is either supporting or leading the following actions to support the priorities of the 17th Assembly:

Priority 1 – Build a Strong and Sustainable Future for our Territory

Description

Strengthening our relationships with Aboriginal and other northern governments

Actions for 2012-13

- Justice will provide support to GNWT departments through advice and services of the GNWT Aboriginal Consultation Unit as well as legal counsel.
- The Department will support discussions with Aboriginal leadership on effective delivery of programs and services.

Description

Negotiating and implementing a devolution final agreement

Actions for 2012-13

- Justice will provide legal advice and support to GNWT departments engaged in negotiations and intergovernmental planning.
- The Department will provide drafting services to GNWT departments for required legislative initiatives.
- The Department will assess Justice-specific program or policy considerations that may be associated with devolution.

Description

Working with our partners to ensure responsible stewardship through our land and resource management regime

Actions for 2012-13

- Justice will provide legal advice to GNWT departments.
- The Aboriginal Consultation Unit will work with GNWT departments to deliver training, provide information and offer advice on effective approaches to meeting the GNWT's legal obligation to consult with Aboriginal governments.

Priority 2 – Increase employment opportunities where they are needed most

Description

Reducing dependency on government by encouraging people who are able to enter or remain in the workforce

Actions for 2012-13

- Justice will participate in the development of an anti-poverty strategy with other GNWT departments.

- The corrections training program will continue to be offered. This program provides Northerners an opportunity to pursue a career in corrections and apply on entry-level positions in the Correctional Service. The program also provides Northerners with training that may build toward careers in related fields.

Priority 3 – Strengthen and diversify our economy

Description

Making strategic infrastructure investments such as the Mackenzie Valley Fiberoptic Link

Actions for 2012-13

- Justice will provide legal advice to GNWT departments.

Description

Supporting the Mackenzie Gas Pipeline project

Actions for 2012-13

- Justice will provide legal advice to GNWT departments.
- The Department will participate in GNWT processes and planning activities in order to identify service/program needs and mitigate potential socio-economic impacts in communities.

Description

Improving our regulatory processes

Actions for 2012-13

- Justice will provide legal advice and legislative drafting services to GNWT departments.

Priority 4 – Address housing needs

Description

Completing and implementing the Shelter Policy Review including fair and sustainable public housing rent scales

Actions for 2012-13

- Justice will participate in the interdepartmental work to identify policy and programming solutions that span departments and disciplines in order to improve services/ supports to individuals and families at risk.
- The Department has a primary interest in exploring ways to improve health and social services/supports for victims and offenders.

Priority 5 – Ensure a fair and sustainable health care system

Description

Investing in prevention, education and awareness and early childhood

Actions for 2012-13

- Justice will participate in interdepartmental work to advance prevention-oriented awareness and educational campaigns, particularly those that target high-risk behavior leading to crime, family

violence, and drug/alcohol abuse. The Department will continue to work with communities to develop local anti-drug awareness and prevention initiatives through the *Not Us!* campaign, and look for ways to complement other prevention oriented initiatives that target common audiences and high-risk groups. In addition, the Department will continue to offer services and supports to families and children (e.g. mediation services, parenting after separation programs, children's lawyer services, victim services) in order to assist families and individuals who may be in transition or crisis.

- The Department will explore opportunities to improve services and supports for at-risk youth and adults – particularly offenders – through integrated case management approaches that involve other departments, disciplines and professionals.
- Justice will make improvements to services and supports available to victims of family violence and abuse. This includes implementing actions from the review of the *Protection Against Family Violence Act* as well as completing the Victims Services Program Review. The Department will also work with the RCMP, other GNWT departments and frontline agencies to raise awareness and improve responses to family violence and abuse.

Description

Enhancing addictions treatment programs using existing infrastructure

Actions for 2012-13

- The Department will examine current alcohol and drug treatment being offered to offenders in correctional facilities as well as in the community (upon release). The Department is interested in exploring options with Health and Social Services for effective addictions treatment and counseling for offender rehabilitation and reintegration, and with Education, Culture and Employment for social or educational supports that offenders might need while in custody and/or upon release. A primary goal is to achieve a seamless transition for services and supports to offenders as they leave custody and return to their communities and families.

d) Infrastructure Investments

Planned Activities – 2012-13

Yellowknife: Courtroom 1 Retrofit

The current facility is over 30 years old. Even though there have been various upgrades to certain parts of the building, it has been many years since the last renovations to Courtroom 1. Courtroom 1 requires upgrades to lighting, technological installations and most finishes, as well as a new public seating area, upgrades to witness and jury boxes, and either replacement or refurbishing of both free-standing and built-in furniture.

Yellowknife: North Slave Correctional Centre – Flatbed Truck

The Department delivers culturally relevant programs in support of offender rehabilitation, community supervision (parole and probation), and custodial placement programs (wilderness camps). Inmates regularly participate in work crews – this approach has many benefits including teaching offenders basic skills necessary for employment, and providing a valuable community service. A flatbed truck is necessary to transport equipment and supplies for work crews and for other initiatives including culturally-based programming.

Fort Smith: Fort Smith Correctional Centre – Male Unit Program Space

The male inmate population in the NWT has increased, leading to higher numbers of offenders at the Fort Smith Correctional Centre Male Unit. Increased custody counts at this facility have led to increased tension on the floor affecting both staff and inmates. In order to address this issue and to allow inmate access to rehabilitation programming that is currently unavailable, an exercise room is being created with a bike, treadmill and gym pads. This space will also be used for inmate training in first aid/cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the workplace hazardous materials information system, as well as anger management and other programming integral to offender rehabilitation.

e) Legislative Initiatives

Planned Activities 2012-13

The following is a preliminary list of Justice legislative initiatives for the 17th Assembly.

New Legislation

1. **New *Legal Aid Act*** – The proposed new *Legal Aid Act* will reconstitute the Legal Services Board as the Northwest Territories Legal Aid Commission, and modernize and streamline its operation. A draft of the bill was tabled during the last Session of the 16th Legislative Assembly. Departmental consultation on the draft bill is expected to conclude in early spring 2012.
2. **New *Gunshot and Stab Wound Mandatory Disclosure Act*** – Justice is working with Health and Social Services to explore the potential for territorial legislation that would make it mandatory for all NWT health care facilities and emergency medical staff to report gunshot and stab wounds to the local RCMP detachment. This legislation would enhance public safety in respect of violent offences and provide the RCMP with information to expedite their response. The implementation of territorial legislation would complement actions to improve community safety, reduce family violence and support victim services.

Existing Legislation

3. **Amendments to the *Judicature Act*** – Justice will work with Industry, Tourism and Investment to develop and introduce amendments to the *Judicature Act* to make monetary penalties awarded under the "government-to-government" dispute resolution procedures in Chapter 17 of the *Agreement on Internal Trade* binding on the GNWT, as required under that Agreement.
4. **Amendments to the *Protection Against Family Violence Act*** – The Department is planning to make amendments to the *Protection Against Family Violence Act* to respond to the program evaluation conducted in 2011. The evaluation involved extensive stakeholder consultations and identified legislative amendments required to clarify provisions and improve processes.
5. **Amendments to the *Corrections Act*** – The *Corrections Act* provides the statutory framework for the establishment of the NWT Corrections Service, whose responsibility is to supervise offenders and inmates placed into custody and/or under supervision by a court or other legislated authority. The existing Act was enacted in 1988, and allows for the establishment of facilities, the provision of probation services, and the development and delivery of programs. The Department proposes that the Act be amended to: (a) provide support to current practices and approaches; (b) set out improved provisions for governance, accountability and compliance; (c) clarify the responsibilities and authorities of correctional staff; and (d) implement the use of modern models governing use of force and search and seizure.
6. **Amendments to the *Securities Act*** – The purpose of securities legislation is to facilitate the raising of capital in the private sector while providing appropriate protections and remedies for investors. The Council of Ministers responsible for securities regulation identify and develop legislative changes needed to support the coordinated national approach to securities regulation. Two national rules are being finalized through this forum that will likely require amendments to the *Securities Act* to allow mutual fund issuers to provide investors with a plain language disclosure document rather than a complex prospectus, and to regulate credit rating organizations.

7. **Amendments to the *Partnership Act*** – The *Partnership Act* includes requirements for the filing of partnership and business names so that there is public notice of the owners or persons responsible for a business otherwise known to the public only by their business name. These provisions have never been significantly amended and are now outdated. In particular, the absence of a periodic renewal requirement has resulted in many existing registrations relating to businesses that have long since ceased to operate. It is proposed that the registration provisions of the *Act* be replaced with new provisions setting out a renewal requirement and establishing criteria for naming. An amendment would also remove the current limitation that registration is only required in the case of a business engaging in mining, manufacturing or trading.

8. **Amendments to the *Interpretation Act*** – The *Interpretation Act* provides rules governing the interpretation and application of the entire body of NWT statutes and regulations. The *Interpretation Act* would be amended to provide that no enactment may be construed so as to abrogate or derogate from constitutionally protected Aboriginal and treaty rights. Similar provisions are found in the interpretation acts of Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

9. **Amendments to the *Coroners Act*** – The Department is planning to make amendments to the *Coroners Act* to clarify the role of the coroners and their power to obtain information related to investigations.

10. **Amendments to the *Cooperative Associations Act*** – Justice will work with Industry, Tourism and Investment to improve operations of NWT co-operatives by making the *Act* consistent with current provincial/federal legislation with respect to regulatory oversight, membership rights, corporate governance issues, and other requirements specific to different types of co-operatives.

11. **Repeal of the *Credit Union Act*** – Justice will work with Industry, Tourism and Investment to repeal the current *Credit Union Act*, as this legislation is very outdated. Credit unions have not operated in the NWT since the 1970s.

f) Human Resources

Overall Human Resource Statistics

All Employees

	2011	%	2010	%	2009	%	2008	%	2007	%
Total	500		534		493		516		529	
Indigenous Employees	250	50%	262	49%	238	48%	238	47%	247	46%
Aboriginal	151	30%	160	30%	148	30%	158	31%	171	32%
Non-Aboriginal	99	20%	102	19%	90	18%	80	16%	76	14%
Non-Indigenous Employees	250	50%	272	51%	255	52%	278	54%	282	53%

Note: Information as of December 31

Senior Management

	2011	%	2010	%	2009	%	2008	%	2007	%
Total	11		13		12		11		12	
Indigenous Employees	5	45%	5	39%	4	33%	3	27%	2	16%
Aboriginal	1	9%	1	8%	1	8%	1	9%	1	8%
Non-Aboriginal	4	36%	4	31%	3	25%	2	18%	1	8%
Non-Indigenous Employees	6	55%	8	62%	8	67%	8	73%	10	83%
Male	4	36%	5	38%	4	33%	4	36%	6	50%
Female	7	64%	8	62%	8	67%	7	64%	6	50%

Note: Information as of December 31

Non-Traditional Occupations

	2011	%	2010	%	2009	%	2008	%	2007	%
Total	24		17		24		4		19	
Male	20	83%	15	88%	21	88%	3	75%	17	89%
Female	4	17%	2	12%	3	13%	1	25%	2	11%

Note: Information as of December 31

Employees with Disabilities

	2011	%	2010	%	2009	%	2008	%	2007	%
Total	7	1.4%	3	0.6%	4	0.8%	3	0.6%	1	0.2%

Note: Information as of December 31

Position Reconciliation

This information differs from the employee information on the preceding page as the human resource information below reflects actual employees as of March 31st of each year. The information presented also reflects position expenditures approved through the budget process for each fiscal year.

Active Positions

Summary:

	2011-12 Main Estimates	Change	2012-13 Main Estimates
Total	454	2	456
Indeterminate full-time	453	2	455
Indeterminate part-time	1	-	1
Seasonal	-	-	-

Adjustments during the Year:

Position	Community	Region	Added/ Deleted	Explanation
Financial Analyst	Yellowknife	Headquarters	1	RCMP Contract Renewal
Program/Policy Analyst	Yellowknife	Headquarters	1	RCMP Contract Renewal

Other Positions

Summary:

	2011-12 Main Estimates	Change	2012-13 Main Estimates
Total	6	-	6
Indeterminate full-time	6	-	6
Indeterminate part-time	0	-	0
Seasonal	0	-	0

Other Human Resource Information

The Department of Human Resources has launched a long-term human resources strategy for the public service entitled *20/20: A Brilliant North*. Among other initiatives, this strategy provides a framework for the development of departmental human resource plans, including succession plans and affirmative action plans.

The following tables indicate statistics on departmental human resource activities with respect to summer students, interns and transfer assignments for 2011. The information is current as of December 2011.

Summer Students				
Total Students	Indigenous Employees (Aboriginal + Non Aboriginal	Indigenous Aboriginal	Indigenous Non-Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
13	13	3	10	0

Note: Information as of August 17

Interns				
Total Interns	Indigenous Employees (Aboriginal + Non Aboriginal	Indigenous Aboriginal	Indigenous Non-Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
0	0	0	0	0

Transfer Assignments (In)				
Total transfer assignments	Indigenous Employees (Aboriginal + Non Aboriginal	Indigenous Aboriginal	Indigenous Non-Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
38	18	12	6	20

Note: Information as of December 31

Transfer Assignments (Out)				
Total transfer assignments	Indigenous Employees (Aboriginal + Non Aboriginal	Indigenous Aboriginal	Indigenous Non-Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
46	22	13	9	24

Note: Information as of December 31

Activities Associated with Staff Training & Development

Human Resource Plan for Justice

Justice faces an ongoing challenge to staff positions with indigenous NWT residents. Like all departments, Justice competes for employees with international resource-development companies that have northern hire quotas and staffing needs that are met with local residents. It is also a struggle to find employees from the north with the right combination of skills, education and experience to fill specialized jobs in courts, corrections and legal aid.

In 2009-10, Justice developed the *Northern Workforce Development Plan* to identify human resource issues and broad goals and objectives. This plan will be used to support work to create a Human Resource Plan for the Department. This work complements the Department's 10-year strategic plan

(which is nearing completion) as well as the broader human resources strategy for the public service. The Department's human resource plan will also be informed by the risk analysis assessment of critical operational / functional areas, an initiative that will be completed in the spring of 2012.

In addition to these strategic initiatives, Justice staff receive routine training and development, including but not limited to the following:

- Corrections Northern Recruitment Training Program – This is a six-week program to train Northerners in the technical skills required for work in NWT facilities. This program provides Northerners with basic skills that will qualify them to be hired into entry-level jobs in correctional facilities.
- Specialized training provided to corrections staff:
  - Integrated Case Management Training;
  - Sentence Administration Certificate Program;
  - National Sex Offender Treatment Program and National Sex Offender Risk Assessment Training;
  - Domestic Violent Offender Supervision;
  - Corrections Service Canada Parole Supervision Orientation;
  - Community Corrections Personal Safety Training;
  - Self Defense Refresher Training;
  - Cell Extraction Training; and
  - Risk Assessment Training.
- Sheriff officers receive ongoing self-defense and CELT training.
- Legal Registries staff receive training on new systems, (e.g. Corporate Registries Database).
- Court workers receive regular training to expand their experience with courts and their administrative knowledge.
- In the Collaborative Justice Model, selected staff participating in the pilot will receive additional training to reflect changes in the scope of their duties.
- Legal and legislative counsel and legal aid staff lawyers are provided with opportunities to take part in professional development courses designed to augment their skills, including drafting courses and intensive trial advocacy training. The Department also liaises regularly with the Canadian Bar Association and the Law Society of the NWT to promote the NWT as a place to practice law in both the private and public sectors.

g) Information System & Management Overview

Overview

Approach to Information Management (IM) and Information Systems (IS)

Justice is responsible for the administration of courts, policing, corrections and community justice as well as the delivery of a number of other programs and services to the public such as victim services, legal aid, the rental office and legal registries. The diversity of these responsibilities – including the need for strict security, the local and national requirements for statistical information, and the legal framework Justice operates within – governs the Department's approach to information management and information systems (IM/IS). Advances in technology and increased access to the Internet present opportunities, create challenges and raise expectations by clients and the public. The high level of crime – and particularly violent crime – in the NWT, changes in federal legislation and increased resource development can have an impact on the Department's workload and IM/IS requirements. And finally, IM/IS systems need to be maintained and updated, and new systems need to be developed to respond effectively to these pressures.

It is clear that the Department maintains one of the largest application portfolios, as well as one of the most diverse security and infrastructure portfolios, within the GNWT. In the next four years, the Department will be faced with a number of IM/IS challenges and considerations. Additional financial and human resources are required to respond adequately to these challenges and to take advantage of the opportunities provided by new technology.

1. Security Requirements

Management of Information – Information must meet strict security requirements (both electronic and physical) due to legislative and privacy concerns. This is especially true for the courts and corrections areas. As an independent branch of government, NWT Courts have records that do not fall under the purview of the Executive branch of government (i.e. the Department). These records must be kept and managed separately. Additionally, the sensitive nature of court documents requires a high degree of security to maintain the integrity of each record and protect information that cannot be made public (e.g. youth records). For these reasons, the Department informatics team – not the Technology Service Centre – maintains and manages the systems related to these records.

Management of Facilities – Courts and corrections program areas also require systems and technology to protect the physical security of the public, offenders and accused, and staff. The courthouse in Yellowknife and correctional facilities throughout the NWT use complex internal security tracking and surveillance systems that must be maintained. In correctional facilities, these systems must be monitored and maintained on a 24/7 basis in order to support operations. These systems are also solely managed and maintained by the Justice informatics team.

2. Statistical Requirements

The Department generates and manages statistical information on a wide variety of program areas and topics, including legal aid, maintenance enforcement, corrections, court services and victim services. The Department contributes electronic and print data to national institutions, including Statistics Canada's Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. This information, along with statistical information from other jurisdictions, is used to report on the justice system in Canada and is very important to the

Department for planning and evaluation purposes. Statistical reports also provide NWT residents and stakeholders with important information on justice issues and programs. The Department must remain an active contributor to national surveys on justice services and issues in order to benefit from the analytical work conducted at this level. This requires a sustained focus on data quality and reporting requirements. The Department must also ensure that data collection activities and information management systems meet our research, planning and evaluation needs.

3. Program Delivery Requirements

Administration – The Department is responsible for providing operational systems to support the administration of a variety of programs. Systems to support these programs must be effective and accessible to staff, and staff need proper training to collect and enter the information. These operational systems must provide statistical information that can be easily accessed to meet local or national statistical requirements.

Service Delivery – Services like legal aid, court services and legal registries require operational systems that support client needs. Clients may be required to pay fines, make maintenance payments (or find out how much is owed) or search land titles. Improvements in technology and increased access to the internet present the Department with opportunities and challenges for meeting the needs of clients.

Accurate Information – Accurate information is fundamental to the efficient operation of many areas including Legal Registries, Maintenance Enforcement and Court Registries. In Legal Registries for example, the information that is maintained is the basis of many high value transactions in both land and personal property. Errors in the systems used to record this information could have a significant impact on commercial activity in the Northwest Territories, as well as posing a significant financial risk to the GNWT. In addition, the maintenance of accurate corporate records can be critical for organizations seeking funding or wishing to avail themselves of business incentive programs.

4. Major Information Systems

The Department's application portfolio consists of 36 independently maintained applications. Below is a list of the major, mission critical applications maintained by Justice information systems staff. These applications consist mainly of security systems, program administration systems and public service delivery systems.

Security Systems

Courthouse Security Surveillance System	Court Services
Corrections Security Surveillance System	Corrections
Building Security Control System	Corrections (North Slave Correctional Centre)

Program Administration Systems

Jury Management System	Court Services
Court Information Tracking System	Court Services
Justice Information System	Court Services
Inmate Trust Accounting System	Corrections
Correction Offender Management System	Corrections
Portal for Electronic Data, SharePoint Server	Corrections
Document Registry Tracker	Legal Registries
Legal Aid System	Legal Aid
Lawyer Time Keeping System	Legal Division

Appointments and Revocations Database	Legislation Division
Coroner Results Database	Coroner's Office
Coroner Statistical Tracking Database	Coroner's Office

Systems for Services to the Public

Active Receipt System	Legal Registries
Document Imaging System	Legal Registries
Corporate Registries database	Legal Registries
Land Titles Daybook	Legal Registries
Personal Property Registry	Legal Registries
Electronic Document Analysis Retrieval	Legal Registries
National Registration Database	Legal Registries
Child Support Manager	Maintenance Enforcement

Planned Activities – 2012-13

Continuation of the Existing IM/IS Strategy

In 2012-13, the Department plans to continue the implementation of the existing IM/IS Strategy. The current strategy focuses on managing growth and development by gradually reducing the number of small, individually maintained/managed applications with more current, easily maintained web based applications or large-scale GNWT global solutions. These new applications are expected to increase application life cycles, provide better opportunities for knowledge transfer, share a common look and feel, require minimal maintenance, and share economies of scale (e.g. large global solutions). These actions are anticipated to reduce the Department's overall total cost of ownership.

The IM/IS Strategy will be revisited to align with the Department's 10-year strategic plan and will be informed by the in-depth risk analysis assessment of critical operational / functional areas to be completed in the spring of 2012. Justice will also continue to work closely with GNWT committees and business advisory groups to identify common IM/IS issues and solutions at both the departmental and governmental level.

Data Analysis / Information Management Review

In 2012-13, the Department will continue to assess information needs for national reporting requirements, program planning, and evaluation. Changes will be made to existing data reporting as necessary and to accommodate any new requirements or requests by Statistics Canada. This activity supports internal efforts to understand justice system trends and pressures, and provides an opportunity to be proactive in reporting requirements and changes.

Video-Conferencing Initiative

The Department is continuing to examine the feasibility of conducting closed circuit video conferencing between the Yellowknife correctional facility and the Yellowknife courthouse. Early indications suggest the potential for significant reductions in the travel time required for preliminary and remand hearings. During the next four years, Justice will examine the feasibility of introducing video-conferencing capability between the Yellowknife courthouse and various correctional facilities across the NWT. Video-conferencing may also be considered for policing and other programs that provide services to the public, including the services offered through the Rental Office and legal aid. The focus is to consider the use of this technology (where applicable and appropriate) to maintain or improve services and reduce costs.

Courts–Jury management System

The Department has recently finalized the in-house development of a new web based Jury Management System. Staff are currently being trained and the application is expected to be online in early April 2012. This newly designed system has been demonstrated to other jurisdictions and has received considerable interest. The Department may be able to share the application and to cost share future enhancements.

Courts Management System (FACTS)

The FACTS system represents one of the Department's largest application investments and is indispensible for the operation of Court Services. In 2010-11, the Department experienced a substantial reduction in the support offered by the system developer. It is very possible that even this reduced support for the application will cease within the next few years. In addition, risks associated with maintaining the existing application have been increasing yearly. The application is limiting the Department's ability to migrate to newer servers and requires multiple adjustments and accommodations when implementing new technologies such as the Windows 7 operating system. Justice is considering options to migrate to a new court information system. In 2012-13, the Department plans to seek federal funding for an options study for a new courts system that will meet the long-term operational and statistical needs of NWT Courts. As part of this study, Justice will look for opportunities to cost share with other jurisdictions.

Corrections Offender Management System (COMS)

The Correction Offender Management System (COMS) is the second largest application maintained by the Department, and has a variety of vendor support and technology issues. All external developer support has ceased, and similar to the court information system, COMS is also starting to limit the technology that can be used within the Department. In 2012-13, the Department will seek federal funding to undertake a review of the IS/IM needs of the Correctional Service and consider options for replacement of COMS. A concurrent study of both the correctional and courts systems may be cost-effective. As with the courts system study, Justice will also continue to look for opportunities to cost share with other jurisdictions.

Online Payment / E-Government Initiatives

Fine payments, service fees and information requests are increasing within the Department's client-oriented divisions. In order to manage this increase, the Department must increase its existing IM/IS internal resource levels. Secure alternatives for electronic payment and information sharing (in compliance with the GNWT's web enhancement and E-government initiatives) have been identified, particularly for the Maintenance Enforcement Office and Legal Registries. The Department will continue to review the feasibility of implementing an online payment system for Court Services that would allow residents to make online payment for fines or fees owed.

Legal Registries Online Search Systems

In 2012-13, Legal Registries will proceed with the development of an electronic database to replace the current manual approach to conducting land title searches. The current system consists of plan index books for each community in the NWT that have the title history according to the lots and blocks shown on the plan. The new system will replace these manual plan indices, and will

eventually be linked to the new document imaging database and provide for the online collections of search fees, so that the public can then conduct title searches from their home or place of business.

Legal Registries will also complete the implementation of the Corporate Registries Online System to provide for remote searching of the Corporate Registries Information System. This new online system will link with the new document imaging database and provide for the online collections of search fees, thereby allowing the public to conduct searches of corporations, societies, partnerships and business names directly from their home or place of business.

Maintenance Enforcement System Replacement

A new web based fee collection and client management system for the Maintenance Enforcement Office is anticipated to be running by June 2012, with minimal need for further development. Features include an updated web based interface, new database technologies, advanced reporting capabilities, and the ability to meet the new federal statistics electronic reporting requirements.